

Theatre Australia

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National Guide.

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Australia

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#COMMENT#

Does that's presumably kept you from being the boss up? The Old Time looks close to being saved, but can without being revamped or some extent in the process. No one can doubt that the crown of artistic performance long since passed to Marned, though Marned itself is more in a state where its policies and ideas must be developed or shared in bigger things, if others are not to stand a chance on a with a more solid claim. Marned has the head that wears the crown.

The national and international aspects of the company in March playing five weeks and London and the increasing numbers that John Bell is to bring to the larger kingdom of the company, too, for the degree to which such thinking has already gone forward, particularly since Paul has become "chairman" has undoubtedly been made as fast, but seems to be sending more to consideration than the entire company.

The APG has followed a comparable path going over, no one can doubt, to a clever but little short-sighted and entering into film and radio to such an extent that it will soon have to be called the APG Group of Companies. The more goes, play is being mounted by Hopps, supported in the middle ground between the APG's present initial stage and the MLC's two-headed commercialism. Victoria's new journal has by no means yet been the same — and indeed may lose its head in the attempt — but there is something of a parallel in the way Hopps and the recently announced Paul Williams Company of Jim Shannon and Rex Cunningham's company have been launched.

For a start, as with the early beginnings of Marned and the APG, too, drama and action are once again taking matters into their own hands and thinking their way to inwardly businesslike management. When, because of the Year's financial slump alone, the two directors lost the momentum in which they were going to bring the audience Marned, they went and took themselves another moment.

The belief in the need to present values there: "To tell the story of our times" is the last sign of Paul Williams's being backed by a willingness from all concerned to work on a shortening path rather than further and only some more noble, a trend to achieve better results. The formula has been occasionally successful before and should be again. A levy of the biggest names in theatre, too, Quince and Chas and long the version prepared for the Year's Sydney, every season, now bring a blast of publicity as June 1980 approaches.

Rarely in the glare of the spotlight is the commercial support work on which the theatre industry depends. One of the major attacks for new writing in Australia is finding its actual

work this month, the National Playwrights Conference now in its sixth year. It is known mainly through its achievements, those who saw the Festival or through productions of their own. Hopps's involvement in June Street and later the QTC, a New Zealand Square, The House, Made this month's play and show of the 1977 crop of eight, then in order, date to the Conference.

What a did for the headlines last year it was through the adverse comments of overseas guests John Osborne. Not only did he knock the event before a week-long, a letter was transmitted overseas from an enforced stage day support in Bangkok courtesy of the so-called "middle" but returned to England to publish even to enter another against Australia. "I'm not sure there is a hell on earth" has appeared in saying. Possibly with a splendid display date in its own name, in at least changing the Conference before the public gaze, but it is unlikely that an one star "middle" will be coming this year.

In the past there has been some confusion in the desert of this national meeting ground to be all things to all men. This year the Conference is to be split into two distinct but not wholly separate sessions, the play workshops for the first ten days and a play forum for the last five.

For the last two weeks, then, the new plays are the thing, with all comments and discussion focused solely upon the new playwrights. The six who are chosen may of the limited and fully applicable are covered by a pool of twenty-seven theatre directors, three dramaturgs and then just for the first time a reader's designer. A reader's designer, so named on saving the plays.

When indigenous plays take a significant place in theatre repertoires, they appear alone more than parallel the event, but it is not intended to be a play representative whose producers can buy a cooked fare, though a start would bring that on a degree. The pending principle is the raising of playwrights and the bringing of expert analysis, using practical and theoretical means to their work.

A serious meeting ground for professional and amateur alike, participants and observers, in a lively, informal atmosphere, in the national capital deserves more support. Federal money has been increased this year to \$12,000 but still funding seems to the National University and flows and run the seed — though the new people are not just a step. A year's preparation leading to a fortnight's on more work involving mainly those involved people — some of whom are sponsored by the Conference itself — makes a bill of roughly 125,000. This is less than the cost of one modest professional production, it deserves more support from state and federal bodies and hopefully from the private sector too.

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“QUOTES & QUERIES”



Right: Actor John Gauder in *Memento Mori* as John Gauder. Photo by Katherine McFarlane.

DAWN OF AN ERA

PETER KEMMEL: "The presentation of the *Cassidy Affair* at the Adelaide Festival united a common crowd of my life. The last performance took place on my forty-eighth birthday.

I wrote *A Head Full of Love* in the belief that I was looking back over a life which was in the process of ending. During the previous ten years I had been kept alive only by insurance on a lucky machine. My physical condition was now deteriorating. The death of my mother shortly after I completed the play decided me to go to live in Melbourne, where, for various reasons I would a much better chance of getting a lucky machine. At the hospital there the doctors persuaded me to accept my seat on a lucky device something I had previously refused to allow. With the arrangement for the operation at hand, I wrote *Flower Love*. The operation was, in fact, a brilliant success and flooded with new blood I shot back into life and wrote *An Geger Alege*. Although *A Cassidy Affair* appears in this play as a very good man indeed, his brother Francis positively pulses with life.

I hope this is an indication of the beginning of a new period of fertile creativity for me. But I really do not know in which direction I want to go now. Or even if I will go on writing at all. The prospect is as once frightening and exciting."

A STORY OF OUR TIMES

PANIS THEATRE COMPANY: "Some of Australia's leading actors, directors and designers are combining their talent to help establish the Panis Theatre Company because they believe it is a better deal for artists and audiences.

The new company will open at the Panis Theatre on 15th June with a season of *Pandora's Cross* a musical play by Dorothy Hewett. As a mark of their enthusiasm and support for the project the Company will forgo wages during the first week rehearsal period. They will work for a minimum wage during the season and will share the responsibility for running the company as well as any profits from the season.

The Company is totally independent and will rely on donations for initial finance. With \$12,500 already in hand, the new company again will be needed to launch the first production.

Best prices will be kept as low as possible — \$2 and \$7.50 — as part of a concern to make theatre going more accessible.

The Panis Company plan to make the Panis Theatre a centre for various activities such as seminars of new music music will continue on Saturday nights and this will be extended to seminars of new contemporary music work in conjunction with the Australian Music Centre. Further plans are for the creation of late night cinema.

Major productions will be Rex Crawford's staging of *Lucas Moore's* *Visions* a black comedy set in the palace of Lame, *Four or Whate'er* a *Clayey Soul* for which the company will be joined by Ruth Cracknell as Miss Docker and a Christmas pantomime devised by Norman Gannon with Bill Harding.

Founders members of the company are Jennifer Clancy, Arthur Dignan, Ralph Nixon, John Gauder, Kate Fitzpatrick, Paul Radford and John McGregor. Artists: Directors are Rex Crawford and Jim Shannon with Brian Thomson designing sets, Lucienne Arrighi, costumes and David Redlightning.

The aims of the Panis Theatre Company are to tell the story of our times, to give the tellers the responsibility for the way it is told, and to make the story worth the price of a ticket."

NOW IN THE FOREFRONT

ANTHONY STEELE, as Artistic Director of the Adelaide Festival of the Arts: "Now that the Adelaide Festival Centre is three decades work as the site of around a thousand performances a year, there has been every reason and opportunity to widen the scope of the programme of the Adelaide Festival of the Arts making it a formal high peak of activity in the city and taking advantage of the largely inactive audience to attempt to broaden the base and exposure of the public by programming unusual experiments which is reflected by the times at which we live.

The opinion seems to be fairly widely held to not just by myself (that of the world's festivals which attempt to cover all aspects of the performing arts. Adelaide, at now as the Eastland. This year's Festival will probably, like the previous two, break even financially — taking into account of course all revenues covered back from the public and private sector.

When the Festival goes from here is not for me to say, but will be the responsibility for the new artistic director. I hope profoundly that the Board of Governors will allow him the free rein which I have enjoyed upon and will not try to police or manipulate the content of the programme."

SPONSOR NEEDED

JOAN BLAIR, Memsabe Festival:

"Without the help of a sponsor there is not much hope for us. This year the Bank Bank has sponsored us, and it has indicated that it might help us in the future, but it's not something we can be certain of at this stage. We certainly don't break even on sales of tickets, but provided we can get a backer we will certainly be continuing.

It's more than likely that we will be able to use St. Martin's Theatre as a regular base. It has just been taken over by the State Government and is being operated by an artistic committee, they have to make a report to Mr. Henry in three months time on whether it is viable. They would like to make it into a complete arts complex and have already opened St. Martin's Youth Arts Centre.

This year the Festival of Theatre had nine amateur groups taking part from all around Victoria. They compete for prizes, professional, amateur, actor, actress, director and a twelve month scholarship. We opened with the *Wall Pipers* production at Penridge and they used for summer up. The President was offered to come and collect the prize. We don't get a huge audience, but we're probably about at our limit now. We keep on advertising and being in St. Martin's, it's definitely a help. The Festival was good this year, with production standards very high and the organization going very smoothly. It can only get better.

Memorabilia is always a good for the job and I think it's a good for the people and I think it's a good for the level of culture that is demanded."

DRAMA THE PROBLEM AREA

JOAN BLAIR, Perth Festival: "It is generally agreed that the 1978 Perth Festival

Ray Stanley's

WHISPERS RUMOURS & FACTS



In all the publicity for Mike Walsh's Hayden Press Productions of visits to live-gigs announced that associated with the new company's presentations, will be Malcolm C Cooke and Associates, Melbourne, who worked for Brian Bradstock's Artist Services for many years, is highly knowledgeable about show business and undoubtedly it will be he negotiating the theatrical arrangements. Missing a more aggressive approach by the Hayden lady? Well, it could be because Helen Longley and Leonard Teale are now members of the board.

Speaking of the Teale, only recently did it learn that companies and private individuals giving a donation got a tax rebate on these. And they can specify that such income goes into a particular company or venture. Seems like a good scheme to me, especially if the donors get publicity out of it. After his years with the Chesham Festival Theatre Company, Robert Sangster intends bringing Tynagh Mountain back for another tour. The success of *Shaw's The Apple Cart* shows, we recall, that some years

back John Tucker was toying with the idea of adapting the play and had worked out what seemed like perfect casting at the time. Can't remember all the names, but I do know Robert Helyar was to be Magnus, Helene Welch Graham and Don Lane the American ambassador.

For about the first time, fees were heard at the live night at a Melbourne Theatre Company production — *Monstrous Reg*. And obviously those fees weren't for the first run cast, and director. But at least one person in the audience enjoyed all the Chesham stand-up counter-jokes try on stage, in usual playwright. Ross was at the audience laughing heartily at his own work.

John Dinkelschneider everything a strong early into place for the Caroline-Graham and John O'May to go to London with *The Terrors* and *All That Jazz*. Gordon Chase, enjoying the success he so richly deserves in London with *The Education of Maxine Furler*, writes me that he has "had a fine letter from a twenty six year old Chinese boy saying how much he would like to take elation lessons on my knee".

So it seems that American Carole Cook will be returning here to tour in the play *Father's Day*. She will be surrounded by appearing (and sometimes not appearing when in Sydney) in the role of *Heidi Daily Wonder* who her understudy will be. When that wonderful Kabuki troupe was in Melbourne, I understood representations of a visit along to inspect the Poles Theatre. Surely they might be returning around 1984-85 and already are looking for venues. Could be Sandy Gore will be seen in Adelaide and Sydney this year now that she's in Sydney.

Susan Pennington, who was co-ordinating in

the TV serial *Shogun of Shikoku* (I've not had time to see it) was in the past the most Australian person Patrick couldn't wait to get back here to promote his film *Loyalty* in the Drew. Susan said me the latest Australia to watch she would really like to tour in a play sometime. In England she is going to play *Yare* in a production of *Shaw's Mrs Warren's Profession*, in which Don Bryon will be playing Mrs Warren. English director Frank Hester can't wait to direct *The Secret Significance* and *Eleven* for the MTC, confusion is being a cinema break. He's currently trying to contact people with like interests.

Were there any productions or collaborations anywhere in Australia to mark the fortieth years ago on March 28 of Harold Heer? If so I didn't hear of them!

So that rich musical roots of the multi-colored Michael MacLennan is clear. Who can he get the impact he made on audiences here on that when he toured with his one-man show, *The Importance of Being Oscar*. It was associated with him when he played in Melbourne, and have never ceased to remember the wonderful distant comedies he used to relate in the best presentation. Many are unforgettable — even today — but he was full of tales of how he had acted as a boy with the eccentric Herbert Berthoin. Then, playing *Oscar* in *Three's a Crowd* and meeting Mrs Patrick Campbell in the wings in the was about to go on stage as Lady Macbeth, and how she had whipped a banana from her basket, holding him as you it to be 'poor starved little sister'. Fortunately MacLennan has left us a heritage of his charming books and his (happy) notes on a number of recordings, not least of all his Oscar Wilde show.

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The South Australian Theatre Company

South Australia's State Company

Keith Michell

Interviewed by
Ray Stanley

Keith Michell

Few people, surely, would dispute my opinion that Keith Michell is Australia's most unconsensually disregarded and versatile actor probably of all time. With what seems like remarkable ease he is in fact places hard work has achieved the very pinnacle of success, securing a great triumph to his homeland, landing a fine English company like the Chichester Festival Theatre, which he himself has helped to reach new heights in the last few years as its artistic director.

At the back of it all though he still feels Australian, as he told me in his dressing room at Melbourne's Comedy Theatre one very late afternoon just after a success of *The Apple Cart*. But could he ever return on a permanent basis?

"I would love to work here. I really would like it as a question of when not if!"

One had heard he had turned down the job of administrator to the Adelaide Festival Theatre.

"We never exactly came to any terms. I explained my situation, which is that I want to keep on working in the theatre for a few more years and acting, and I would like to do some more directing. I hadn't decided till I took over Chichester, and then I did so, and found I loved it. And I enjoyed directing — sometimes and usually — directing the whole production. This is something I find very often lacking in production, a sort of uniformity, a concept. And I would like to develop that.

I suggested perhaps one of the national companies might not want someone for Michell to be a co-administrator, so to be an Australian half the year, directing and acting, rather in the way Robert Helpmann did with the Australian Ballet.

Michell smiled. "That's what I've always

thought to myself to be a hypothetical question. — Well, nothing is impossible I suppose — and that's what's exciting about life.

It quoted him as to why he had chosen to play the role of Othello in the current tour when it was huge he had played in the original 1971 Chichester production. Earlier I had heard it was understood which side he would play, that he might even like next time.

"They wanted me to play Othello. I wanted to play Othello. It was a mutual thing. I was quite experienced in doing both, but the management wanted me to play Othello only. I am glad now that we didn't, because our director wasn't very well and we just didn't have all that much time. We were playing *The Apple Cart* at night, and rehearsing during the day. I don't honestly think it would have worked out, it would have meant twice as much work for someone who's playing Iago and for me a hell of a lot of work, although I know the role of Iago."

When I suggested that because of the way it is written, a reasonably good Iago will always steal the play unless it is turned inside out as with Oliver Mitchell's version.

"I found Iago much lighter work. I think people are always very surprised that Iago is such a good part. They are both such good parts, but I do prefer playing Othello. I think Iago is fine, it's a great fun to play — but Othello is the role which comes to my heart. I think it is a wonderful part, much more rewarding to me. It might not be to someone else."

"I think it has to do with the complete submission you have to get, it's not just into another character, but into a kind of me as well. And it has all that strangeness...you discover more about it every time you play it. That doesn't always happen with a part. Also the poetry — I think it's the most wonderful poetry that Shakespeare wrote for my part."

Was he enjoying Othello in his favourite Shakespeare role?

Michell laughed. "Well, the character I'm playing is the monster always it. So yes, I would say yes."

"Iago is a great role" after playing Othello because there are eight performances of the play a week, which is pretty gratifying. I know it would be to stay put, since in the season goes out. Iago isn't to be very taxing for me. I was in here in sleep a lot of the time when I was doing that because the brain tells — it's longer than Hamlet actually, it's very very very long and very tight, mentally agile. Iago requires cerebral energy. Othello is a natural energy, you're physically tired. But with Iago — not certainly with Iago — it's mental energy."

The Apple Cart has proved to be one of the most successful plays staged by Chichester, a played fifty performances in all over the world, then another hundred in the West End. It did

incredibly good business and the London management was absolutely fierce that it could only play a limited season because of the Australian commitment.

What seasonal roles would Michell still like to perform?

"To love to have a go at Lear, and wouldn't mind having a go at the Spanish play and *Cardinal* in something I've been asked to do several times, and would like to."

He was also asked on several occasions to play Hamlet, but only did so at the Bankside Globe in 1971 in modern dress. Surprisingly he has never appeared in *Children And Theirs*?

"I've done *Poor Guy* — well I've sort of loved *Poor Guy*. I always wanted to do *Poor Guy* and never quite got down to it. I did a radio version of it and feel I know it very well. I wouldn't mind directing *Poor Guy*. As time though I find some of them a bit tedious."

Asked about appearing in contemporary plays, perhaps any Australian Michell replied. "I would love to do one of the Australian plays. It'd love to appear in a David Williamson play." Surprisingly he has not had an Australian play submitted to him and would welcome one specially written for him in mind.

And musicals?

"I like doing musicals, provided they're got a good story. *La Mancha* was a marvellous part and so, in a kind of way, was Robert Browning. I love, looking across you see their right eye to play Browning — and then to sing him as well." It was probably his role in the musical *Don Quixote* which Michell has played more than any other.

Impressed with the new wave of Australian films, Michell would certainly like to appear in one and says he has been approached as to whether he would like someone to write for or whether he would like someone to write for him. "I'd like to do some work. I'd only hope they don't think of me only as an English type Australian actor with my crumpled up old face."

After the Australian season he is going to take a couple of months off, just to be with the family and do some art work. It's the sort of solitary talent we which I need, to get on down by myself. In the theatre you're dealing with people all the time. It's very important, I think, for an actor to get right away and be by himself and research... and of course coming back here, coming back to one's roots. I was telling in June Ago about that the other day. It's very meaningful, it's very good for me to be out here, because you sort of smell it, there's a smell in the air which you miss."

Whatever the future holds for Keith Michell, can hope that for Australia sake it brings him back to this country on a more permanent basis, or at least for longer periods. He is one leading actor internationally, and has much to contribute to the performing arts in this country.



Kate Fitzpatrick

Catching Up with Kate

Barry Eaton

Kate Fitzpatrick returns to the Old Time Theatre Company for the first time since Patrick White's *My Age* last year. She is playing the lead in Ted Craig's production of *The Moonshiner*—a role she is looking forward to with some trepidation.

Kate saw a theatrical version of the play at Christmas time in Paris and was rather overwhelmed at the production by the Comedie Française. The Sydney production, though, will not be the original. "That is Tony Harrison's translation as in about 1965 at the time of Charles de Gaulle," Kate explained.

She also caught the London production about four years ago. (Wasn't that don't she?) That was the successful one that starred Dame Maggie Smith and Alec McCowen.

But it was the French production that stuck in her mind, because of the male lead. "He was dark and not traditionally handsome — but immensely sexy. He was just in a volcano and every now and then would erupt. He was just fantastic, really dangerous to watch. These moments brought a lively fire away from his face."

Barry Otto has been cast to play opposite

Kate. She hopes that they will be able to produce the same kind of excitement she experienced at the Comedie Française. "My character is supposed to be very sophisticated. It's rather difficult with all the flying couplets even though it's been translated into a modern idiom," Kate says. "To do the role in her complete satisfaction she would like a lot of time to devote to its development. "I don't personally like big roles really. I prefer smaller, shrewy ones."

is this because of the necessity of a lead part or the time to be learned?"

"No. I'm just lazy. Also I'm afraid of boring the audience when I play big parts. I'm not really bored. I prefer those ones where you were on the example of dancing things and look terrific most of the time. All except for one scene where you're in something dreadful and then go home. You're never on long enough to bore anyone."

Kate also has no injury to her ankle, which may make rehearsals and playing rather easy. She is hoping that an operation will not be necessary as she has a very long time ahead. An involvement with the newly formed Paris Theatre Company in Sydney will not see her in Western movies by Louis Malle as well be directed by Rex Crawford.

Kate is also a regular on the daytime television show *10 km*. Other appearances on film and TV make for a long life. Just as one gets out of those "stuck in a volcano" bubbles, Kate lives reading, travelling and going to movies and restaurants. In between I guess she sleeps — if she ever has the time?



Portable Lighting Controls for the Non-Professional

David Bird

Interest in lighting fixtures in Australia has undergone a tremendous boom in the last few years. During that time more than fifty major theatres have been constructed or totally renovated. In addition, a huge number of

smaller theatres have sprung up in every capital city and many small towns.

One inevitable result of this growing interest in the theatre has been that more and more schools are installing drama equipment in their curriculum and now amateur dramatic societies are being formed every day. In some cases the facilities available for these non-professional activities are modern and well equipped. More usually they are quite rudimentary due to lack of funds or space, or both. In no case is this more apparent than in stage lighting.

Lighting equipment has been a specialty of Rank Australia's Strand Electric Division for many years. The company has supplied lighting and controls for most of the professional theatres in Australia as well as for many amateur organisations.

Recognising the special needs of the non-professional, Rank is now developing and distributing low price, portable equipment, specifically intended for use by schools and small amateur groups.

The Model 3 Portable Dimmer is a compact, lightweight unit made of sheet steel and housing three independent sliding dimmers. A standard 3-in socket could be associated with each dimmer so that three separate lights can be individually varied between zero and full voltage. The unit has a 10-amp fuse and a "power on" indicator light.

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Model 3 units may be purchased individually or as the Double 3, with two units fitted into a custom made chassis case in at least the Double 3 measures 400mm x 300mm x 100mm and weighs 4 kg. The two units can be operated in the case by one person — the dimmer slides of each unit are conveniently arranged for single hand operation — or removed for use in different parts of the working area.

The Model 3 which conforms to Australian standards and is approved by the State Electricity Commission, is backed by the reputation and wide experience of Rank Australia and its Strand Electric Division. A prototype of this equipment was exhibited and attracted considerable interest at the Melbourne conference of the National Association for Drama in Education earlier this year.

The price for the Double 3 at its current cost is \$467 exclusive of tax.

Further information may be obtained from Professional Services Group—Rank Australia Pty Ltd., 19 Trumbull, Burwood, Vic. 3121. David Bird is National Product Manager Lighting at Comstock of Rank Australia.

Insatiability is what Kantor is really personifying.

Roger Pulvers

Tadeusz Kantor, Director of Cricotz, has stunned audiences with his production of *The Dead Class*, brought over for the Adelaide Festival.

In the language of the plays of Stanislaw Ignacy Witkiewicz — the playwright that is Kantor's personal inspiration — a certain victory of stage ghosts makes an appearance. This ghost is not merely a moving white sheet, but an ordinary character who exists from the metaphysical dimension.

This is precisely, I feel, what Tadeusz Kantor himself is doing inside *The Dead Class* (recently seen in Adelaide and Sydney). This is what he means, when he said during a row and a half hour interview (the *Broadsheet*), "We do not play Witkiewicz. We play with Witkiewicz!"

Most critics called him a comedian, a director-actor who calls the shots as they came to him every night. But this is Kantor's theatrical trick. (Witkiewicz was, after all, a glowing practitioner.) He is actually one of the worst, the super teacher in the classroom. He is using one the suggestions of Gordon Craig's *Unerwieszona*. His 'directing' of the play as it unfolds is an act. He convinces us that he is removed from the focus of vision and, by doing so, appears to be a dimension removed.

Kantor has produced only two plays not directly inspired by Witkiewicz. His first, an underground presentation of *Słowacki's Balladyna* during the war years, was staged in a flat across from German Occupation offices. "At any moment", he said, "our bodies could have been walking in blood."

It was at that time that Kantor the artist and sculptor decided — and he did derive these things — to shift the focus of his attention on himself from Malinowski and the Constructivists to the native Polish artistic tradition, especially to Wyspianowski the Krakow artist, playwright and intellectual of the turn of the century. This is not only the Polish tradition, it is the Krakow tradition, a kind of romantic catastrophism that at any moment the world may disappear or be betrayed. Krakow, the great cultural and academic centre, surrounded on all sides by the darkest forces and the myths of the proximity of Defiance.

The last teaching in Kantor, then, came essentially at Wyspianowski. Then to Witkiewicz whose purified aesthetic and poetic freedom reflected a always present Polish Drama Society

worrier of genres of the thirties who was shot at the face by a Nazi policeman on the street for no reason at all. What Rydzicki, who plays the old man in the way in *The Dead Class* is Kantor's comic Father figure. Imagine a busy Jewish dad with two teenage children, a character who would be likely, say, to change into Kafka transcribing himself.

The final influence, and one that Kantor refers back to, is a World Constructivism. In fact, *The Dead Class* may well have been the classroom in Constructivism's magical world of the thirties. Forthelater in Forthelater some thirty year olds return in their childhood classroom to re-enact the practical jokes and settled hypocrisy of adolescence. The last born, exhibited by the man who stands on his desk in *The Dead Class* is the very symbol of Constructivism's novel that the form has replaced the face as the symbol of humankind's experience.

"Landscape is the world in the beginning", and



Kantor, the super puppet

Kantor, "but the comic scenes of the play is always obviously separate. It is like two parallel roads. One is the road that other is the comic road. In my productions there are always legs separate. Others in music scenes run ahead of the rest. When I did Witkiewicz's *The Haze* film in 1967, I didn't introduce any part of the first and well into the past. 'What is it, then, that keeps the two on track, so to speak?' It is *Trojan*. The tension that flows between the two is a changed current."

What did Kantor mean by *Trojan*? I believe that he meant the use of visual symbols and social codes — sometimes an object like a strange barrel, sometimes an enigmatic word usage, a constant word repeated as an incantation, or an everyday phrase from our childhood which is used as a whip on the conscience. These all act as signposts on the road of the comic scene, giving it a familiar markings to the eye. If the audience is familiar with the text, as a Polish audience would be, all the

deeper will be their grasp. If not, the comic scenes stand alone as all times as a visual and verbal presentation, the play itself. This is what makes Polish theatricality unique: the independence of the comic scenes as an entity in itself. In most other countries, drama lives heavily on the written text, the play as an interpretation of a script. The good Polish production is not an interpretation of a text, but a text in total comic experience. It may be French, but not too French, to divide all theatre into Polish and non Polish!

My theatre is not "professional", says Kantor, smiling. After all, I've only had one presence in my life. By the definition given out by the Ministry that defines the funds, the dependence on a professional?

Kantor's work makes a unusual entry for Poland. His troupe comes together rarely, only when he has a new workable idea. Otherwise he goes for months. The show is put on at a somewhat late century changes in Krakow. It is the peculiar atmosphere of his city that nourishes his drama, not internal Polish subculture. Had Kantor been born in Ottawa, Quebec (yes, 1911), he would hardly have been able to narrow the trap to *Słowacki*. One already whereas allow only for what Kantor calls 'professional' theatre.

During a long speech in *The Specter in Adelaide*, Kantor spoke of his ideas of the early years. "And I say that the theatre are no place to present plays, and the museum and gallery no place to hang pictures!"

Evermore appalled. So did I. Then he added, "Of course I don't believe this now. I am just trying to be chronological for you! My face turned very red. This is Kantor. The total commitment as an idea, taken by him to the limit, then dropped when he has explored it, is favor of a new dramatic concept."

His new concept is what he calls the theatre of death. He acts it out himself in *The Dead Class* as Witkiewicz's ghost. Here is where he combines his own idea with Gordon Craig's *Unerwieszona*. Craig saw the super puppet as the original inspiration for theatre: that scenes are people who try to dress, live, and act like the puppet. Kantor was the Original Actor as an individual who left the first command. When everybody was part of the group there was no distinction between audience and actor. When the single individual left the group the others watched him. He took the responsibility for his own death upon himself rather than act is realized by the group. That only was the first scene", said Kantor. "He was the first catastrophe!"

As one moment in *The Dead Class* a character screams out, "I feel loneliness!"

Insatiability — Witkiewicz's word *Maczysciosc* — is what Kantor is really personifying. For both Witkiewicz and Kantor, it means the human inability to understand the real question of existence, and the accompanying attempts to demonstrate this to others using the stage as a representation of the form, made out



ONLY HEROES

TWELFTH NIGHT

"it had a dying fall ... 'tis not so sweet now as it was before"

The Twelfth Night Traumas assessed by Colin Robertson

AND HEROINES

Colin Robertson looks at the history of Brisbane's Twelfth Night Theatre Company

Colin Robertson is a freelance writer and Queensland theatre critic for *The Australian*

On the morning of Christmas Eve 1977 the committee of Brisbane's Twelfth Night Theatre walked on stage and into a scene which would have been subtitled "Cris frustration" had it been an old talent movie: first the remaining members of the production team.

Artistic Director Joan Whalley had already resigned although her resignation officially did not take effect until 29th December.

The Brisbane press quoted one of the line, Jeremy Muir-Smith, as saying the whole thing was bloody stupid, and that given the money, he could make the theatre a going concern. A view which apparently was not shared by the committee because Muir-Smith was one of the applicants for the position of artistic director. The committee eventually decided to replace the poet with a freelance artistic consultant Bill Redmond from the Old Tote Theatre in Sydney.

Although the appointment of a freelance artistic consultant was unconditional there was no suggestion that Muir-Smith was incompetent in his work. He had directed one of the few successes for Twelfth Night in 1977 (*The Window Boy*) and in fact everyone acknowledged the great amount of work and devotion to Twelfth Night displayed by all the sacked production team.

The fact was there was simply no money left to pay a permanent staff and given the unique and chaotic methods of funding the arts in Queensland where the State Government grant is on a fiscal year and the Australian Council money is calculated on a calendar year—something had to be done fast and quietly.

Rightly or wrongly the committee's actions were not appreciated by Joan Whalley or by Twelfth Night founder and patron Rhoda Falgout who felt that the members were not kept in the picture and that scant regard was paid to the forty year

old traditions of Twelfth Night by such paragonate actions. Looking at the situation from the outside however it is difficult to see what else the committee could have done, especially at Christmas, the season when Australia closes down for a month or so and people are hard to contact.

At the time of writing the rift between Joan Whalley and committee president Marie Watson Blake is badly wide and the audience conducted by Bill Redmond after which local actors were told that the company would be using southern talent has brought sharp reaction from well known theatre people like M.I.D.A. grad and Ron Finney. Finney was quoted as saying that the original concept of Twelfth Night was that of a company which provided speech and drama training, recognised young talent, saw that talent through workshop on to the stage and produced local acting ability. But the committee says the main aim must now be to mount some professional productions which will bring back the audiences and the subscribers and thus attract more subsidies. Then they can move back to the encouragement of local talent and move towards Twelfth Night's original aims. Again from the outside looking in—it is easy to sympathise with both points of view, but finally it seems that young talent won't have much use for a dedicated theatre nor one which houses another Government Department.

As things stand, Bill Redmond has taken over as freelance artistic consultant and will produce Haffigan's *As Prime of Love* on 2nd May. Mark Johnson has taken over as General Manager. Johnson is a forty year old Englishman who has plenty of experience in theatre and has recently been assistant administrator at the Old Tote. Nobody has yet pointed out that the Old Tote has not exactly been a financial success, but in case they do let it be said that the Old Tote is another story and that most people feel the two good things on the new deal are the quality of the appointments.

The Twelfth Night Theatre complex is situated about a mile from the heart of Brisbane in Bowen Hills. It is a picturesque little building in dark brick containing a four hundred seat theatre, a

restaurant and a downstairs club. The original intention was that the club and the restaurant would help provide income to service the mortgage on the half million dollar building—one of the first of its kind in Australia.

Twelfth Night Theatre Company began in 1936 and its name is not a Shakespearean allusion but a reference to the fact that their plays began on the twelfth day of the month. Rhoda Falgout ran a school of speech and drama, on Workham Terrace and with fifty members, put on plays at the old Empire Chambers then the Princess Theatre in South Brisbane. Later they moved what had been an old church and George Hall became their home. Twelfth Night has always been something of an amateur and Brisbane people will remember their being thrown out of the Albert Hall by the Methodist sisters for their production of *White's New Flower* which contained a simulated rape scene. Strangely enough the Church eventually sold the land on condition a theatre was incorporated into the new insurance building. Thus the State Government Insurance Office acquired a theatre and it was Joan Whalley's suggestion that the Queensland Theatre Company be formed to occupy it. Twelfth Night also did the famous *Now and Almost* by Ross which gained actor Norm Stewart to be arrested by those well known arbiters of the public taste—the Queensland Vets Squad. This was in 1947 and when the site was thrown out of the Supreme Court a new era for freedom of speech began in theatre, not only in Queensland but all over Australia. One of Twelfth Night's strong supporters over the years was opposition leader Bill Hayden.

But that's jumping the years, because it was back in 1959 that Rhoda Falgout asked Joan Whalley to take over as artistic director. Joan felt that she wasn't ready and instead went to Sydney to lecture at M.I.D.A. The speech and drama school continued to turn out young hopefuls. Barry Copestan, Barbara Williams, Carol Burns, Judy McGrath were some of the subsequent beneficiaries who emerged. Eventually Joan Whalley came back to the fold. (She still refers to the Twelfth Night founder as Miss Falgout) I towards the end



Twelfth Night Stage and Auditorium (Photo: Richard Savage)

of the vision Brian Sweeney entered the Twelfth Night story in earnest.

Brian Sweeney is now chairman of the Australia Council Theatre Board and is a man of vast enthusiasm. You can take Sweeney lots of ways, you can like him or hate him but you can't ignore him. Ask any restaurant who runs out of Doors Perignon while Sweeney is there and find out that he is a man who is not easily discouraged. Joan Whalley tells of the day he sat at her desk and peered up a photo of her in profile which emphasized a rather large nose. "Joan" he said "that nose has gotta go." Give me the phone. It was two o'clock at night but no worry in Sweeney who dialed the home number of a leading Brisbane plastic surgeon. The surgeon's wife answered and was told abruptly by Sweeney that Joan Whalley's nose had gotta go. Sweeney had no time for involved explanations. And go the Whalley nose did, to be replaced by a snappy shorter version with which Joan is delighted.

Sweeney decided that what the Twelfth Night Theatre Company needed was its own complex and with his vast business contacts, his incredible generosity and goodwill he set about making the dream come true. The then Liberal Party Treasurer Gordon Chalk played fairly gallantly with a loan of \$250,000 and with a strong ground swell of public goodwill and private generosity the theatre opened in February, 1971. They were badly days for Twelfth Night. The Queensland Theatre Company was still in its infancy and everyone was delighted with architect Vinty Gird's design. But if there were no cracks in the building there were plenty in the relationships between those responsible. From the outset Sweeney claimed that once the building was there the people would support the theatre. Joan Whalley took the opposite view that the people would say "What the building is up to you don't need help any more", it seems amazing but as dear old adolescent

Brotham that's exactly what happened. The company had to survive a half million dollar overdraft and with financial pressures mounting, Joan Whalley alienated many of her staunchest supporters. Brian Sweeney resigned from Twelfth Night Theatre committee along with several others in 1975 and although his relationship with Joan Whalley has deteriorated somewhat, he is still one of her greatest admirers and her savior. "There ought to be a statue of Joan in every theatre in Australia" he says. "She is one of theatre's great martyrs."

In 1976 after not much joy with either the club or the restaurant the Government stepped in, bought back the building for a mere \$180,000 and appointed the Twelfth Night Theatre Building Trust to run it. In Dallas, Texas where a similar thing happened, the theatre was given back to the company at a nominal rent. The Menzies Theatre pays no rent although no one would deny the wonderfully talented people they have at the helm or quibble at their success.

Twelfth Night was still paying large sums to the Government and Joan Whalley was dealing with day to day accountants who she did not understand. Then she had a cerebral haemorrhage. In 1977 production standards slipped to a low ebb with programmes printed on recycled sheets and the stage sometimes unacceptably lurid round Twelfth Night like Hank's ghost.

Which brought us to the present. Joan Whalley has recovered, but is better about the way things have gone in the last few months. The Building Trust is trying to interest the Queensland Government and particularly new Minister for Culture Tom Newberry in having the Works Department maintain the building. Mark Johnson is trying to get himself a reasonable office and co-ordinate the totally unco-ordinated system, among three thousand other things. Bill Richmond

is trying to mount some professional productions. The committee are trying to get new subscribers and keep the old ones happy and informed. There are no cliffs in the Twelfth Night Story. Only heroes and heroines and some tragic mis-understandings.

What should happen ideally is that the Government should either give Twelfth Night back their building or at least charge a reasonable rent, Joan Whalley should realise that the committee and especially producer Maria Watson Blake wish her well. She should herself get back on the committee where she should be made welcome. Mark Johnson should talk often with QTC artistic director Alan Edwards and find out what holds in Queensland theatre politics. Edwards has been a great supporter of Twelfth Night Theatre and realises that Brotham must have an alternative professional company.

Newly appointed artistic director of the Speech and Drama School Jane Adams must continue her great work with the children and the name should not be changed to the Twelfth Night Youth Theatre, which has been suggested.

The committee should revalue their efforts to raise money through subscriptions or any other means. Talented people like Ron Finney and others who hold opposite views should be positively encouraged to help towards the ultimate goal of a second production. A theatre company which can compete with the highly successful Queensland Theatre Company. There is an abundance of amateur theatre companies here already. And when all that happens we can get back to seeing some wonderful theatre at Twelfth Night. Brian Sweeney should be placed at the bar to personally supervise a few bottles of Chen Perignon and in the early hours we'll get back and not fall asleep when he recites T & Elton.

Katharine Brisbane looks at the 1978
Adelaide Festival of the Arts

THE BEST FESTIVAL YET

The general consensus around Adelaide has been that it was the best Festival yet.

It is easy to forget, of course. It has been so every Festival since 1968, and certainly I remember such excitement of other years like the Royal Shakespeare Company's bookending *A Winter's Tale* and *Twelfth Night* in 1970; the amazing production of the *Jesus Christ Superstar* concert performance in 1972, local performances by the South Australian Theatre Company and New Opera in 1974 of Elton's *The Book of Gospel Place* and Iwasaki's *The Encounters of Mr. Bessie* — and even that for a Festival of surprise, as the small things as well as the great. I do not remember a better Festival than a certain one.

It is having the Festival Centre as a focus that makes the difference, of course. The organisers have then spent a couple of festivals tied into the building and audiences and visitors have become accustomed to the burning hot offer

the crowded trains and bus areas, the open air performances in the grounds and the complex of marauders in the gardens across King William Road which marked Festival Week. Even before the programme entered its third and final week the director, Anthony Searle, had announced that his office reception had reached the only per cent breakdown point and that the only loss the Festival Trust had taken had been on a couple of pop concerts (calculated against his harsh judgements).

Certainly all the major events had been solidly booked, some in advance of opening. It was a personal triumph for Searle whose last Festival as director it is. Like those before him he has had narrow runs.

Big names this year included Sir Michael Tippett, whose *The Midsummer Marriage* was the grand opening event, Tanguy Maeswicht who despised the Delphes costumes and the stars of the Kabuki Theatre of Japan. But for me

the moment of surprise was at the smaller theatre where one really felt the squeezing to capacity.

The undisputed star of the Festival was Tadeusz Kantor's *Croak 2* company from Cracow. Kantor is not of those obscure and uncompromising geniuses which Poland seems to produce, who regardless of the conventions and pressures of life pursue an aesthetic with a single-mindedness any capitalist society would regard as simply eccentric.

Kantor is an artist who in the '30s and '40s was a radical surrealist. His life has been devoted to the concept of matter and movement and the objects we use to offend ourselves from the terror and vulgarity of the material world. He was wrapping up objects in the name of art long before Christo.

His *The Good Class* performed by what he calls the Theatre of Death is a natural progression in his painter's study of the body as



Chris 11's *The Good Class*

Photo: Delman and Smith

man in movement. The scene is a schoolroom with innocent-looking and busy-looking books. The students are for the most part equally old and busy — with grey chalky faces and moving mouths, like puppets. "The first time you see a dead man in the first time you see a man!" Kantor has said. The students of group activity which make up the play miraculously awaken on to those mundane functions by which we sustain life: The scruffy figure of Kantor himself, his brown face and black velvet jacket gleaming amid the dust, moves among the figures, re-orientating and detaching them, a vivid reminder of what it is to be alive.

Philippe Genty in his black velvet suit gives the same vivid impression while in view of the audience he conducted a *pas de deux* with a tragic *Prometheus* marionette. As the knowledge that he is being manipulated glazes upon the doll, he breaks the strings out by one until he is left a motionless heap, gathered up at the finish with infinite tenderness by Genty. This remarkable French puppet company has sophistication and dry wit as well as an inspired skill in which audiences responded in ovations. They metamorphose marionette strings with military

manipulation. Invention stretched several levels at times: for example a feather fan became a woman being photographed, the photographs took up some *clogs de ballet* which by degrees lost their lookers, then their legs — and so on.

Philippe Genty was followed by the Arts Theatre by Steve Berloff's *And* intended to be the focus of the Festival's last work and the cause of the biggest of Anthony Sher's headaches. News of the punk play arrived at literally assaulting us with the true depths of depravity in the East End of London these days, was enough to have the Opposition spokesman on the Arts Mr Hill call for Sher's resignation. Instead of counsel the action was looked over.

It is an oddly unfinished play — and ended it is hard for a critic to judge it as art when its correspondence is flashing on previous pains across the period by way of punishment. In fact the play remained one of nothing more than I. I. Dones draped up, with its empty attic Shakespearean doggerel and its scolding and obsession with women. It has many playful surprises, at the episodic way it moves from scene to scene depicting madness in the sex and money absorbed lives of Mike and Len, and there is

poignancy in the hapless doom for lesser things expressed by the mother and the girl in the play. The whole does, I suppose, reach new heights of crudity but there and the rest of the play are finally forgettable because Berloff himself appears to have no grasp of what. The characters remain unhelpful without the individuality to arrest pity or horror — in the style of the actors — casual amateur and bold — that gives the evening its quality.

The night has something in common with *Two Gentlemen of Verona* taken up *Adapted* by the National Theatre. Under the compass of the actors the show has pulled together into a pretty impressive piece of history. Much like a central theme is an unspoken — the idea of the release of the rock and roll generation taking a kamikaze flight to bomb-out in Rushmore. Ray where were about the *Spooky Nation*.

And the return of that desecrated decade is abundantly filtered through the language and the action. The play's strength is its rudeness and message: its weakness is that it takes itself too seriously. Despite the marvellously comic energies of Ken McQuade as a rocker who has hit the other side of the ball, the script exhorts the audience not only with an barrage of words. It was only this, it seemed to me, that stopped the show being a winner.

By coincidence at the fringe the Stage Company at the Swan Theatre has had another piece of nostalgia for the 60s. *Let's Twist Again* by Bob Green. This play has had a chequered history, having been scheduled for performance by the S&TC many years back, and the script certainly shows commercial potential. The setting is a country dance hall where a group of former teenagers have gathered for a party to go over old times. It turns out that for the leader the search for his lost youth is more than a game and the play ends in sudden violence. Ben Deham and the cast make a good use of the work with resources available: most locations design could have made more of the movement in and out of rooms, and a fairly woman character who gives a lift to the middle of the play disappointingly disappears without notice. But it still looks a promising piece.

Adapted in fact, looks to though it has taken over from the cinema. It is a satire for alternative theatre. Troupe, who presented at their Red Shed a sketch about the Rounding of Adelaide. *Don't Listen to Gump* by David Allen was original in its approach to an old subject and of local some spiritual relief. Tom Thorne's production of *Seven Years*. *Seven Years* comes in *Seven Days* had some good going going for it, too though I doubt that the return of this piece of *Seven Years* provides too much for its present reputation.

Altogether *Seven*, the alternative festival, had some 111 events on which my spare time could make fairly a mark.

The South Australian Theatre Company contributes to the festival was a serious and satisfying production by Colin George of *Spheeris* — two plays. *Spheeris* the King and



Ken McQuade and Bob Weaver in *Backlash*

Photo Peter Holliman

Godspie at Calcutta. The Misra-witch style, especially in connection with the Ganga, can mean place in the category of museum shows these days, but that is not to detract for quality. The opening scene against Richard Roberts' starkly modernist set, in which the blackened bodies of dead children swirl to highlight the despair of the famished people of India, has an expressive impact. *Godspie the King* is familiar to most theatregoers but it was a rare treat to see this second play. *Godspie the King* shows a physical and temporal pain and power in *Godspie at Calcutta* the writing is spread in an almost ritualised degree. At the King lights the wall of the gods in the first play, so he eventually and lead, in the second and in reward is received body and soul by them. The play is awashingly interpreted by the cast particularly Dennis O'Riordan in *Godspie*.

Of a different nature entirely, though also on the theme of suffering and the gods in the black American show, *For Colored Girls: Who Have Considered Suicide When the Rainbow is Enuf*. This collection of poems and prose for seven, rainbow-coloured women by Ntozake Shange is a touching and eloquently presented poem which I think deserves deeper attention than it presently received here.

The cast was recruited for the Australian tour and on opening night in Adelaide were nervous of their first audience. They spoke too fast and too softly in a too large theatre, and their unfamiliar rhythms were for a while a problem to the audience. For me, anyway, it was difficult to come to grips with Shange's very personal message of degradation, loneliness and hope for the black women of America. The whole is deeply felt by the cast who speak with the author in dance, song and monologue, telling a painful story of misplaced love and sacrifice in a man's world. They end on a disheartened but understanding note with the chorus "I found God in myself".

The Kabuki, on the other hand, was more a diplomatic exchange of views and perceptions than of mutual mind-bending. The company presented two pieces, the first a short dramatic vignette from the first act of *Yoshitsune Senjimon Jidai* in which a fox — a magic creature in Japanese mythology — disguised himself as a servant of Prince Yoshitsune in order to retrieve his wife's hand drum made from the skin of the last emperor. The story gives occasion for one actor in the role *Arakawa Kiyoko* His to play the true and false current and the fox as a series of lightning changes. Tragic is accompanied to more colorful and athletic performances from younger acts and other incidents containing dragons, monsters, battles and invasions might have appeared less surprising — and indeed less effort — to an Australian audience than this one. One suspects that such exercises were an entertainment because for those at the top of the Kabuki hierarchy.

Shamshogawa was a better choice in that it is a whole work, and satisfying both musically and



Pointe Marie Ballet

Pointe Tadeusz Brzezinski

in the refinement of its staging and emotional expression. It is a dance drama based on an old Noh play about a woman's great surprise watch for her kidnapped son, was performed especially in that moving manner by Nakano and Uchida VI — and yet again there was a self-conscious awareness of the perfection.

A good part of the trouble in bringing to Australia the classical drama of any country is that our tastes behind the movement from which a spring. The presence of an audience familiar with the art is the best guide for the stranger to an understanding. An unfamiliar drama in an unfamiliar country with an eager but uncomprehending audience, is not the best atmosphere for any art. But it is better than nothing and the answer is not to have lots of vagueness like the Kabuki, but more. On the whole, however, I think I enjoyed the short open air rough mixed primitive performances by the Uthman masked dancers of Senegal. They performed their version of incidents from the Ramayana with a sense of spontaneity but this might have been a dress up party while the audience squinted on the amplified steps.

The SATC broke new ground by presenting a children's play as a magic ritual in their Playhouse — *Little Women and the Doves* was

commissioned for the occasion from Anne Harvey. It is a very traditional style of play about a comical family on a journey to meet magical animals, which made the most of the staging opportunities provided by the theatre — I think my main criticism was that the two children in the cast have almost no influence upon the action of the play. There were more shows I did not see in my time there — some because bookings were too heavy like *Robert Arden's* after *Devil Club* show, which became spontaneously a tour de force of the famous and the English comedian Chris Langham's very late night performance. Peter Skene's *The Cloudy Afternoon* gave the weight of real drama and narrative to the third week of a programme overall acted like at choice of one of the mainstream work if done elsewhere in this week. Some shows came and went too quickly like *The Bread and Puppet Theatre* presented by a group of Australians under the tuition of Peter Schumann, founder of the American Group One or two, as always happens did not come at all.

But on the whole the short quality and abundance I do not remember a better festival — and that is an achievement in a show that has been going on for years.

ROSS THORNE

Melbourne's Lost Theatres

(PART 1)

Olympic Theatre 1855. A scene from *Macbeth* with G. V. Brooke in light as Macbeth, and R. Young

In 1834/5 Melbourne was unofficially settled by Henry and Benjamin, in 1842 the town saw its first official theatrical performance in a timber shed which possessed the ubiquitous title, Theatre Royal.

Melbourne was fortunate to have possessed an Irish emigrant who, after arriving in 1848 and becoming a leading journalist, developed by the mid-1850s an increasing concern with the preservation of the then vanishing history of the early settlement. Under the name of "Garrywer", Edward Finn described an historical, anecdotal and personal account of the town and its people from 1825 to 1852. He describes the two earliest theatres, the enter managers who ran them and finally dwells at some length on George Coppin, the first of the big touring actor-managers to organise theatre in Australia.

Finn gave the dimensions of the Royal, Pavilion, Victoria, as it was variously known in its short life, as 65 by 35 feet. It contained a pit and a surrounding dress circle of boxes which was constructed so low (probably in the style of an English provincial Georgian theatre) that the more affluent classes could lean over and "boast" patron in the pit, that is, push their hats down over their eyes. A hand-mannered polite, upon removing his hat and showing a bald pate, would frequently have his demoted donec made the target of scornful expectations. There was also in the accommodation of the theatre a gallery made up of a circular row of small pews served at by a ladder-like stair.

This Pavilion Theatre, rocking on the wind, leaking in the rain, was a small house run by a consortium of managers (the only system of management by which it could sustain a house) its performances were the scene of regular uproar and enthusiasm with actors having to walk out of role to a bare or unruly audience. One

night when George Buckingham began brandishing a dagger at the audience a "barley loan in the front of the pit declared he would punch Buckingham's head, and the enraged actor solemnly vowed he would keep dagger and all down the other fellow's throat". There were missiles thrown at actors from the audience and, in greater attack, thrown were made of

storming the dress circle by the company, with occasionally the upstart in the auditorium revealing that on the stage. In 1844, when the Pavilion was virtually bankrupt, Charles Wentworth treated a woman, said to be his wife, to an evening, both were in a forward state of intoxication when a quarrel broke out between them in the gallery. "Wentworth sat to thrashing



Queen's Theatre (1849). The theatre building was much improved upon the original Melbourne theatre, but the audience behaviour remained much the same.

the bar-ane, and she smited him, like a wild cat about the throat. He was half choked and to ward off death by asphyxia had her up on the parapet in the act of pushing her over into the pit, when he was rescued again by Chief Constable Sargent."

The *Paragon* was not welcomed after April 1845. On the 21st of that month a new theatre was opened: "The Queen's Theatre Royal it was a "plain, substantial, brick, shingle-roofed building, with no attempt at external architectural ornamentation", situated at the north-west corner of Queen and Little Bourke Streets. It was slightly larger than the Pavilion, being 75 by 40 feet, holding during a capacity benefit performance 943 persons. The stage would have cut off between 30 to 35 feet from the long dimension, a contemporary newspaper gave the pit as only 37 by 25 feet, put as that benefit it held 453 bodies. The interior design by architects Charles Loring and George Whitton, was criticised by being vulgar, "coarse in design and crude in execution. The proscenium was an elliptical arch, supported by pilasters, and surmounted by the Royal Arms, while there was a grotesque attempt to convert niches, out of which loomed figures said to represent Aeschylus, Euripides, and a couple of unrecognisable magnates of reputed mythological antecedents."

The company at the Queen's was far but the weather was so exceedingly poor as to deter the most ardent playgoers, when the weather brightened no one did the box office takings. Then there arrived a gale dissipated theatrical in the form of

George Coppin. Coppin had formed a company in Launceston after having played in Sydney and Hobart. The troupe company landed in Melbourne on June 14th, 1845 and first performed at the Queen's on the 21st. They, particularly Mr and Mrs Coppin, were a tremendous success: on 3rd July in the farce *Widow's Wish* Mrs. Coppin sustained eight different characters "in very superior style". The Coppins remained at the Queen's in Melbourne until August, 1846 when they moved to Adelaide. After losing his wife and a fortune in Adelaide, George Coppin returned to the stage, for the most part at Geelong, then went to England, only to return to Melbourne in 1855 to settle. And to bring with him his own private theatrical.

Before this event there were two other houses built: there was the predecessor of the Princess, Artley's Amphitheatre (as he detailed in another article), and another Theatre Royal, which opened between Swanston and Russell Streets in Bourke Street on July 16th, 1855, only fourteen days before Coppin's professional troupe. Artley's Theatre presented its first dramatic season.

The Royal was built by John Black in the place of J R Burns. The building hotel and theatre had a depth of over 300 feet in Little Bourke Street, the auditorium and stage, in three dancemans, were equal to the equivalent at London's Covent Garden or Drury Lane Theatre of the time. Its four levels seated 3,000 persons in typically cramped 19th century conditions. Although the population had grown

considerably due to the Victorian gold rush, Melbourne could not find 5,000 pairs of tickets every evening to sit in at new four theatres.

In October 1855 John Black went bankrupt and the builder of Artley's auctioned off his new amphitheatre. The lights of the Queen's Beckford and quenched to permanent darkness in 1856 but Coppin took over Artley's for rentable in 1855 and formed a partnership with the tragedian Gustavus Brindley to buy the lease on the Royal, reopening it in June 1856 with *Six Weeks in Company*.

The amphitheatre was renamed Princess's in 1859 and the smaller capacity Olympic was found redundant so Coppin had it converted to Turkish baths which were more financially successful than his theatres in the depression of 1860. (During mid 1860's there was also a strange circus tent-like structure, the *Sale de Valentino*, which was only licensed for medical entertainment.)

The building of the Olympic, perhaps more than any other act demonstrated Coppin's flair for adventurous entrepreneurship and his own confidence in his ability as manager. Being a well respected actor-manager in England he could test his Australian opportunities in obtaining quality performers, however not everyone walks down the street to buy a theatre off the shelf and ship it across the world (as well as rigging up a leading actor for 10,000 Pounds for 200 performances). The manufacturers of the theatre, E & T. Bellhouse of Manchester, did have some experience, that of building Prince

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Albert's iron theatre and ballroom at Balmoral Castle. The Olympic hall contained stanchions, being clad mostly in glass, where it showed a public front, and in galvannead corrugated iron elsewhere. It

was 88 feet long, 40 feet wide with, it seems, from a description in *The Australian Builder* no gallery. The layout was very modern for the time with six boxes built into the proscenium in front of

the earlier Regency style doors; and comfortable stalls took over the front portion of the pit. The proscenium for a house building 1150 persons was a relatively wide 33 feet.



Olympic Theatre, Exhibition and Lonsdale Square (1954). The cast and stagehand show theatre had a relatively low red-tiled roof, the slightly higher stage is seen at the right.

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International Greek Theatre

Bob Henderson

Risks are regularly overcome by the simple charisma of the known Star.

Greek Theatre? What, you mean Sophocles, the classics and that? The festivals, today, summer evenings open to intimate atmospheres, coach tours to Epidaure between island hopping?

Well, yes, all that. But let's go back to Athens, where it all began, and to now.

Is there such a thing as a contemporary Greek theatre? — an up-to-date living thing which the people support? Can you find anything resembling the actor in thoroughly European classical Athens? Paris and London?

It might be more interesting to compare Athens with Sydney, a city of roughly the same size. My newspaper today lists 110-120 commercial theatres offering winter shows. In winter there are about a dozen company companies on the fringe, some performing like in the midland? What's playing, actually?

A handful of classics from various countries, some well known, modern European plays, one full-scale musical, many musical revues, a fair dose of musicals, plenty of light comedy, a few children's shows, and about a dozen contemporary Greek works that you've never heard of.

Is all that so Greek? All in Greek, you say. But accessible to the foreigner? Up to a point. Tourists patronise the festivals, for a start. And familiarity with the works is enough to tempt many to a further look. What's more, they're making it easier for you right now, with four English plays on show. Two *Antony and Cleopatra*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *Twelfth Night* and *Hamlet's Revenge*. Not that it's really for our benefit: plays in English tend to translate easily into domestic Greek, the general approach is external and already British and American have a lot to offer, then, there's enough Anglo-American amongst the upper middle classes to ensure that there's always at least one Noel Coward show in town.

And who goes? Of course, the well-to-do, some according to the show. But, at the legitimate theatre, a look familiar to the middle class, the students. Television, introduced during the last eighteenth century, seems not to have hurt the theatre, as it has the cinema. And there are few shows running anything which is any good at all in likely to play for a long time (Things are different at the National with its planned repertoire): *Hamlet* and *Antony and Cleopatra* both enjoyed recent twelve month seasons. The long runs have a lot to do with the star system, none of which is a success.

The average price of a ticket is about A\$4, more than twice the price of a movie, with big discounts for students and soldiers doing extra time. Some say it's too expensive, sometimes or not. The Greek financial, in-depth reviews appear daily in all the newspapers. Some like by *theatre* is it?

While the two national companies, based in Athens and Salamis, respectively, rely on heavy government subsidy, basically, theatre in Athens is financed by small private firms. Actor managers, and manager-directors are common. Not to mention actor manager-directors. It's not always so. The main point, I think, is that companies tend to stick together. Even the well known risk of doubling as director and lead actor are regularly overcome by the simple charisma of the known star.

For instance, there is the presentation of four Platonic dialogues at the Athens Theatre — an unlikely choice of material, you would think, but it makes surprisingly good theatre. Largely responsible is the presence of Demetris Maras in the central role of Socrates. He gives a performance. Maras also directs and did the translation and adaptation. The show goes down as 1976th performance.

A more stunning example of a star in action is waiting at the Superstar, with the beautiful Irene Karanisi playing the lead in *Reveries*. *Pigeon* has not even the reputation of a success and

immensely playing just like the silliness of the play — but Karanisi is certainly funny from the opening lines and makes the character unquestionably human, making effectively through the mistakes of the last scenes. Her mother Corina Karanisi directs. This is the last show of the season.

On the other hand, you sometimes see fairly a good play and a good actor sacrificed. The *Plagues of Dorian Grey* (John Chalkas, from Wikos) was recently at the Epitaph, had the excellent young Cypriot actor Demetris Papanastasi hopelessly out of control at the centre of his own very effective production.

There are two institutions within the National Theatre Company's rather stable looking premises in town centre. The Central Stage, and the New Stage. The latter offers flexibility in production and theatrically, a most adventurous repertoire — though we've seen *Camel*, *Caligula* and *Albert's A Defence*. Balance there recently, so you don't expect radical experiments all the time. At present, the larger theatre is offering Kostas Gerasimos in *Corpus* (I think it can be guessed while at the New Stage we have two new plays by local playwrights. *The Month* by George Mavroudis and *The Game and a Temple of Memory* by Emil Constantine. Mavroudis, an outstanding writer, with shades of David Storey and Edward Bond.

At the time, the National promises you a regular change of programmes, with plays from all over, and a reasonably tight production — as well as all the other plays and scenes of a comfortable suburban simplicity. You tend to hear the same complaints about the National as you tend to hear in (in actual similar companies overseas, lack of excitement, stuffy management, dead wood at the top. Indeed to expect young actors on, and

Finally, dissatisfaction with the National because most shows during the festivals, when the amphitheatres open, large crowds, you the audience — and extremely enthusiastic — Greek audiences and time and again, having been inspired by Brecht, Brecht, Brecht, et al, we are let down by yet another competent and unimpressive production of such examples, courtesy of the National. By contrast, in the same festival, for independent companies come up with some successful productions. Such as Amphitheatre's *Prope* — impossible to get a ticket for this one, despite the vast capacity of the Heral Amphitheatre. And Arts Theatre's production of *Prope* a minor work of Amphitheatre, to say the least, which ought to have been a masterpiece by a brilliant production and cast, was an hilarious performance, wild, noisy and wild.



EPIDAURE: THE ACROSTIC THEATRE



Rodger — our most imaginative and exciting director.

RICHARD III

RAYMOND STANLEY

Richard III by William Shakespeare. Melbourne Theatre Company. Melbourne Theatre. Melbourne. Victoria. Opened 15 March 1973.

Director: **Mick Rodger**; designer: **Kim Carpenter**; music: **Martin Pineda**; lighting: **Jamie Lewis**.

Richard III: Bruce Myles; **Liamson**: David Downes; **Chorus of guards, murderers, messengers, citizens, soldiers etc.**: Bruce Myles, Peter Curtis, Don Bridges, Les Marleaux, Brocklebury, Lloyd Cunningham, Hastings, Barry Phares; **Anne**: Lynette Curran; **Elizabeth**: Jennifer Wood; **Rivers**: Sydney Crossen; **Lord**: Michael Edgley; **Northampton**: Jonathan Hardy; **Saulsey**: Ben Harberg; **Queen Margaret**: Jennifer Mages; **Edward IV**: Norman Roper; **Rochester**: Gary Day; **Clifford of York**: Gary Waddy; **Archbishop**: Stephen Bishop; **Edward, Prince of Wales**: Jonathan Downes; **Richard, Duke of York**: Paul Jensen/Gary Phillips; **Cade**: Ian Sutherland; **York**: Lloyd Cunningham; **Richard**: John Stanton.

Richard III has always been my favourite amongst Shakespeare's histories. The fact that possibly the character bears little resemblance to the real life Richard, has never seemed to matter; it is the play itself, hanging together perhaps better with its confused character relationships than some of the other histories. Richard himself can be interpreted in many varied ways than most Shakespearean characters and I have always admired the several portrayals I have seen. It really struck though, it was probably Marlon Brando — red-headed — who caught my imagination most when he performed the role at Swanford back in 1963.

I did not see Olivier play the role on stage, but have never really forgiven him for casting that wonderful character of Queen Margaret from the film version. With such major re-construction, the changes Mick Rodger brings to text and conception in his version for the Melbourne Theatre Company, really do not irritate and frequently impress. For instance, having Richard open with some lines from *Henry V* seems perfectly valid.

Rodger probably is our most imaginative and exciting director. Not all of his effects come off too, as with his production of *The Revenger's Tragedy*, it is always good theatre and constantly presents that element of surprise so often lacking in Australian productions.

One feels that Rodger has conceived his production specifically for today's audience and, with the gigantic over-shadowing background wheel of lanterns frequently revolving, and Richard as a partial idiot, it is easy to read things into the production Rodger may or may not have intended.

Not always has he been fortunate with his cast, at least in some of the smaller roles. It highlights either the scarcity of actors around Melbourne — or at least delinquency in those when the MTC is willing to supply. Too often one has the impression of people being engaged simply because they are actors, not because they have a love or aptitude for Shakespeare. There is for instance Mary Ward as the Duchess of York, a good actress doubtless in a straight commercial play, but badly miscast in Shakespeare. Also Gary Day (Rochester) and Ben Harberg (Saulsey), both obviously more at home in TV police dramas. And Bruce Myles, as one of the death-like chorus, with his extremely irritating nasal voice.

As Richard, Bruce Myles really comes into his own at last — a highly satisfying all-round performance, beautifully spoken. Belinda Myles seems on the verge of being accepted as one of our major — and certainly most versatile — actors. There is no trace in his performance of some of the characters he has played at other recent plays, such as *Julius*, *King Richard the Lion* or *Of Mice and Men*, although at times one does detect hinting glimpses of his Terry Hancock in Hancock's *Last Wolf Howl*.

Particularly impressive is Jennifer Wood as Queen Elizabeth — a new name to Melbourne, and hopefully one which will become more familiar. Another newcomer to the Victorian capital Barry Phares provides a well spoken Hastings in his big scene. Although Lynette Curran's shrill-voiced Anne seems out of place in her earlier scenes she later brings much strength and credibility to the role. Then there is John Stanton, wisely hired as Rochester.

Two of the MTC's stalwarts yet again do worthy work in this production. Firstly David Downes, who probably can spend Shakespearean roles better than any other actor in the country, he seemed a natural for Clarence, and even manages to excel expectations. Then Jonathan Mages, whom I have never ceased to land here achieves new dimensions to his talent by being utterly convincing as the elderly



Bruce Myles (Richard) in the MTC's *Richard III*. Photo: David Parley.

Queen Margaret. How clever of Rodger to pull-out such a performance.

Not all of Kim Carpenter's costumes can bring forth admiration. Some, bright, outrageous and outrageous seem to work — but others look very much out of place and on the first night caused a few laughs on appearance.

All things considered this is quite a satisfactory production of *Richard III*, for which most of the credit must go to Rodger. One wishes the film industry here would take him up — the mind boggles at what he would do as producer — but I cannot think of any movie director in Australia who has graduated from the stage. Maybe this is one of the things wrong with our current film industry.

A serious handsome production.

PERFECT STRANGERS
CHRISTIAN BROTHERS

JACK HENDERSON

Perfect Strangers and *The Christian Brothers* by Peter Biskind. Directed producers: presented by People Theatre Foundation at the Playbox Theatre Melbourne. Vic. Opened 12 March 1973. Director: **John Bell**; Designer: **Larry Goodwin**; Stage Manager: **Matt Simpson**. Both: **Baronley Phillips**; Music: **Philippine**; the British: **Peter Carroll**.



Neil Fitzpatrick in *Perfect Strangers*

This evening of *Ros Rux* is made memorable by a top performance, that of Peter Carroll in *The Christmas Brothers*. In a theatre space where we often accept the spliced, trick-laden and outright fraudulent, it is refreshing every now and then to see an impressionist that is authentically life: minutely detailed and technically accomplished.

Here is an actor working on his nerve-tips and ticking rules. The character and performance Peter Carroll has wrought is a possessed one. It has a strong whiff of dementia and hysteria, the product of a lively associating imagination and intellect, something that puts him in the select company, among males of Peter Cummins, John Gaden, and Max Gillies.

These qualities, extreme and lightning, the turbulent contradictory frustration of the brother, his alcohol and these solitudes, all in a compressed series of fragments, theatrical shards, assembled from his personal and teaching life, all cleverly contained under the quasi-naturalistic umbrella of an afternoon in a classroom.

The metaphor of the audience as class, however, works constantly at *The Playbox* because of the near-colombic nature of the stage. The moment coming up from the front led to a weird kind of detachment, especially ward far me as I'd personally experienced, at a Marist Brothers School, the whole scholastic.

Perhaps beyond the call of critical duty, I felt the need for some moments of emotional surgery—the hate, the terrible sadness, power, the utter violence that sometimes leaks from such interrogated men. And underneath the mild detail, the theatricality, the comedy (at times too little), the large composite character, I wanted the play to do more dramatically, to take me on some kind of expedition, which even the most vicariously non-narrative Beckett does in a great *Waiting* play.

Ros effectively demonstrates a state of mind, yet equating there is any wonder, yet. I had a nagging feeling during for more linear action, for a dramatically shifting awareness. Admittedly the play does this

to a certain extent when Carroll, crushed and hunted, brilliantly presents the brother painfully yearning for another vision of Our Lady, a Second Coming (not without sexual undertones), a palpable reaffirmation for himself and a besieged religion.

In a more legible world, the text could have been given a concentrated treatment. Happily, more facetiousness and satire are generally avoided—except in moments where a camp character-trait intrudes. This is a serious, handsome production from actor and director, both alumni of Marist Brothers schools, where the trope, the line delusions, and somewhat paranoiac religiosity, were comically, tragically the same.

The second play, *Perfect Strangers*, is expertly developed at this stage. The carnivore appetites of a separating couple do not dramatically, expressly under-estimate with the carving up of their joint history. A library is of course a repository of collection, as is a nicely fulfilling relationship: the erotic link and content inherent in the barbaric fluxion of both is not fully tapped.

Beverly Phillips and Neil Fitzpatrick gave it such othermatics as the required unappetizing fashion, which the production fails to transcend the metaphors of the *Unbearable Transience* and the sipped-out Mr Cool Larry Eastwood's design astutely evokes hostile Sydney that is in Frank Stella.

MAKASSAR REEF

V-J RICHARDS

Makassar Reef by Alexander Begg, Melbourne Theatre Company at the Russell Street Theatre, Melbourne: Vic (opened 21 March 1978) Director: Aaron Heacock; Designer: Terry Tripp; Worthy (Auntie): Maudie Maughan; Camille:

Oliver Liddy; Mark: Kevin; Ravinder Samra; Sheila: Steve; Gerard: Maughan; Perry: Claude; Red: William; John: Max; Colleen: Neil; Neilson: Sandy; Sara: Anna; Marlene: Samra.

Makassar Reef was received mainly by the Melbourne critics, which aside from leaving Begg's unimpaired contempt for the critical press, also misses the point slightly. The point of *Makassar Reef* is the same point as was made by *Murder*: Begg is interested, even more than Williamson, in taking out his own area of the entertainment business. He makes points in the play, about romance, repetition, suspense, indeed life itself, but not in the passionate grotesque fashion of Williamson. Begg's plots nowadays do not have a purpose outside of the passing of a reasonably ok night away from the television. That is not a dishonourable aim, and *Makassar Reef* is not a dishonourable play, although it is spiritually confused, and hydrophobic in its search for character and action.

Makassar Reef's Somerset Maughan in *Camille*, a collection of Italian and local stock stories (they feel it about as difficult to have as anyone in a Roman mood), who, largely for want of anything better to do, relate, and relate.

There's an anecdote when in flying out what to do with his life almost fails for the older woman (a route from Geneva to Australia, where your old daughter in law) and set straight by the previously timid finance. She is a bit of earth motherly drags him back to the north. Finance has been set on the path of character renewal by being dumped after an unrequited affair with a sculptor, who, on leaving her rips off his wing.

Other elements include an actual Indonesian who seems to be after the sixteen year old and as a guardrail, can't say anything about anything. There's a corrupt customs man, and an intermediary who sets up the smuggler for a bust, and fails him out when he needs to get out of the place.

As you can see there's a lot going on, plenty of opportunity for gaps, plot devices, romance, thrills and violence, crime, corruption, drinking eating, music, night-seeing, culture, and lots more. And there is a lot of this pot pours in *Makassar Reef*, set by director Aaron Heacock as if it were *Camille*, with that intertextual remains unexamined supposedly pursuing everything.

Unfortunately Begg hasn't written the right play for that Maudie Maughan's character isn't Ingrid Bergman, nor is Gerard Maughan Humphrey Bogart. Ravinder Samra does a lot of it as Sydney Government (it's the Mahon Palace, not Hotel and Max Colles an excellent Peter Love. But in the end *Makassar Reef* isn't funny enough, *convoluted* enough, *upheld* enough to do other than stagger along. By trying to do too many things it does very little, without being funny, and without confounding the East, Tourism, Racism, Anything.



DON'T FIDDLE AGAINST THE WIND, MATE.

RICHARD FOTHERGILLHAM

Four's Public Against The Wind After Its Successful Run. Queensland Theatre Company. SGO Theatre, Brisbane. Qld. Opens 1 April 1978. Director: Bryan Hannay. Design: Peter Bellamy. Stage Manager: Ellen Kennedy.

Bob Ben Gabriel, Frank Gordon Glenwright, Ilseana Pat Thomson, Norman Ingrid Mawson, Philip Geoffrey Cartwright, Norman Douglas Hodge.

I'm puzzled by *Public*, for starters I've never met anyone who likes the play. That includes perhaps a dozen acquaintances who're seen different productions (the QTC is the third) not to mention several who were at the Canberra Playmaph's Conference where it was workshopped. And I can only agree — it's a dull script. The QTC production has a dull hospital gown set, and the acting hardly lives up to the standard of the writing that I can remember, and the layout of characters — men, feisty wife, drunken friend, child, and child's fiancée from the other side of the tracks — is the absolute stereotype of Australian suburban life from *The One Day of the Year* to *The Naked Year Show*. In order to relieve the monotony of this, the central character Bob Davies occasionally gets into poetic outbursts about flowers. The director of the current production makes a plea in his programme note for resonance of dialogue: mostly it's as resonant as concrete. The actors do their best, but the life isn't in it.

There's been, however, a rather nasty spinoff from the present QTC production. The *Courier Mail's* critic David Newbould dismissed it as his shortest review ever: "It is no good." I'm told that at the next performance after publication of that comment the audience was encouraged to boo the critic. Suddenly there's a whole SGO full of people who like the play a lot. But as a publicity man put it crudely to me once, making people like this is a difficult advertising and PR job, but that's all it is. And attracting anyone who dares to call it that is not a bad way to start.

Personally, I didn't think the play dull, just boring, trivial and naive. Rather stupidly naive as the part of the QTC to put it on furthermore. Since it can all too easily be seen as a season-busting play-

presenting it before Queensland's politicians weeks before they move to introduce "right to work" legislation could have been a conscious plan (I'm sure it wasn't). "Right to work" incidentally is an idea borrowed from some states of the USA, where it has destroyed trade unionism to the extent that the average wage in those states is 30% lower than in the rest of the US.

Major and cutting plays need to be written about the trade union, how about for starters a play about how when Connolly sacked four hundred of its thousand workers at Wages, they successfully bought off the opposition of the remaining men (and their wives) delegated by offering those remaining a 20% wage increase?

I can see examples like that to show why *Public* really is a paddling play. It concerns a worker (while I presume who refuses to sign a 32-hour levy applied by his union). The ensuing oppressions lead to hundreds of men being forced to go on strike, and for the worker it means social

ostracism, the breaking of his family, and finally a vigilante attack on his flower bed. I'm sure it happens, and it could have been a good play.

What's wrong fundamentally is that we see the frightening consequences of a trivial act totally through the eyes of the worker and his family, and the actions of hundreds of other people are treated as the behaviour of isolated and sluggish fools. We are invited to consider a trivial act as a major blow for human freedom, and to see other ordinary humans who disagree with that act as a mindless and evil mob. This effect is exacerbated in the QTC production by the interpretation of the main role of the Union-organiser. He's the only representative of that 'mob' who appears on stage, and his lines could be played quite straight, but he's played here as a sneaky and cunning young bastard. In short what the play represents is a grotesque indulgence in a paranoid vision of the world.

It really isn't any good.

Renewed respect for the old larrikin.

BRISBANE SURVEY

DON BATHILLER

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The Apple Cart — Queensland Theatre Company
May, January — Arts Theatre

This month's Australian premiere from La Boite (yet-another one) was *Snare Wilson's The Bear* — a biographical farcical of the life of Alexander Crowley. It's a work of a kind of ultra-theatricality which sets the unnecessary dangers of Crowley and his girlish mistress Lulu against the intense events of European history between the wars.

David Bell gives further evidence that when it comes to visual treatment he is a director with flair. Everything and everyone looked fantastic — and I didn't mean "cheap". Attention to detail was careful. But in handling the scenes all constraint



The Apple Cart

was removed. What happened was a splash, ugly, but not hardly dishevelled. The powers of darkness are more poring at an average staff meeting.

Greg Silverman seemed more demotivated than demonic. The script suggests that Crowley should "exude power" and "intimidating energy" instead he was frenetic and sad — a cross between Groucho Marx and Marcello.

The only truly diabolical thing all night was the spoken French.

Where *The House* lies it on with a crowd. Bernard Shaw's *The Apple Cart* (Character Theatre Productions) appears to deal with the issue by sending it altogether, and yet the shaming presence and power of Shakespeare loomed behind the tenuous and impotent political games of King Magnus and his cabinet. I had a far more cold on my blood.

This fairly ordinary production raised more respect for the old horrors.

In addition I had a prejudice shaken. Keith Michell is usually too self-conscious as an actor for my taste, but on this occasion he was both stylish and controlled. Myre Dawn Pines gave us a lively Cleopatra, ruffling and poisoning her brothers a lot, but remaining, for all that, a good girl.

For the rest, there seemed to be a general agreement to play it broad (possibly for its promotional benefit) which on Nigel Stock's otherwise stout *Prime Minister* looked silly — the modest but the noble notes for example — and in Ray Davies's *Housewife* was tedious—much, about someone.

Visually the production had the same economy peak feeling as did the Company's *Orlando* a few nights before.

Meanwhile, up at the Arts Theatre, they've gone back with the Stephen Spender version of Schiller's *Mary Stuart*.

The accolade here goes to the superb costumes of the principals, to some strong female performances, and to efficient if unspiced direction by Bill Hill.

The main costumes were beautifully made. So well made, in fact, that they threw into unthinking relief both the lumpy dress-balls, throw-out down gear of the rest of the cast, and the slightly unmanageable setting. To recall just one feature, the awful mixture of reds, is to solve a range of issues.

The play itself gives an interpretation of Mary which is highly sympathetic and totally opposed to that so recently seen in the television version of *Elizabeth R* — and it is in the historical interest which is the main point of the play. This being so, one's sympathy is somewhat aroused by a cast which depends so much on a contrast issue between Mary and Elizabeth (which never happened) and on statements Mary is purported to have made to her confessor (which nobody could know about).

The lead roles of Mary (Jennifer Radbourne) and Elizabeth (Jennifer Dabraham) were played with fire and strength, though the Elizabeth was rather too derivative of Glenda Jackson.

It was good to see so many of the Arts Theatre big guns on stage together and Bill Hill thoroughly in command.

A human's defiance of God.

THE CASSIDY ALBUM

KATHARINE DRIBBAGE

The Cassidy Album: A Man God Fears Love As Lovers Hope by **Peter Kenna**, Sydney: Crown, Sydney, NSW. An Adelaide Festival Production. Director: **John Tucker**; Designer: **Ian Robinson**.

Don Cassidy, Tom Norton, Paul Carter, **Wo Keweenaw**, Agate Cassidy, Doree Don, **Maggie Kirkpatrick**, Joe Cassidy, **Deag Shaidon**; Jack Shannon, George Cooper, Jonathan White, Danny Cassidy, **Alan Williams**; Martin Cassidy, Ned Thomas, **Philip Pines**; Helen Cassidy, Sophie Cassidy, Marcie, Tim South, Royl Cassidy, Louis South, **Joanne Pines**; Paddy Cassidy, Tom Parkinson, Frances Cassidy **Ray Whigham**.

The editors have accepted I do this review—I suppose in the hope that I shall blow my mind as I did with *The Doll Trilogy*. A rare opportunity, they are thinking, for a significant statement.

Well, it is inevitable that *The Cassidy Album* be compared to *The Doll Trilogy*, since by some curious coincidence our two senior playwrights have come up with similar projects. One Patrick White thought of autumn and winter in *Sappho*! But in fact the one trilogy experience bears no relation to the other, except on the fact that they challenge us to treat two playwrights as dramatists.

The pair do have one other important similarity; and that is that the authors have lived in the task a means of working their way back into their Australian psyche after long absence.

Both works are measurements of the past from the perspective of middle age. But while Lawler's look has been to travel backwards to the beginning, the and predicated from the start, *The Cassidy Album* is a journey forward into darkness, an unsure, experimental, brave and personal voyage of discovery in which the author himself estimates, like Oedipus, like the cause of his own self destruction.

Summer of the Seventeenth Century remains the masterpiece of *The Doll Trilogy*: *Kid Snakes* and *Other Times*, while *Handsome plays* in their own right, serve to expand a familiar story and enlarge the emotional force behind the denaturation of that doll's house of seventeen years by the cold draught of middle age. *A Head God*

will remain the major work of *The Cassidy Album*, but in this case less down the direction of the journey but the ground roots to the other two plays—the rich soil of nostalgia and morality which creates Joe Cassidy—a hero who again like Oedipus is not bad but—in Joe's own word, "brave".

I suppose it is important to compare Kenna with Sophocles, especially since we think of the Greek as the most perfect interpreter of universal truth and *The Cassidy Album* is a not altogether satisfactory account of a hard-shouldered writer whose life and potential death hardly touch those around him—certainly not in the way Oedipus' life is bound to the life of the people of Thebes. I suppose the parallel has occurred to me because a season of Sophocles was playing concurrently at the Adelaide Festival.

And yet the authors do have a common theme—a human's defiance of God; and Kenna was far braver in his not as affirming, but as reflecting his environment. For Cassidy's journey, if one cares to see it that way is a challenge to self-destruction on the basis of a hard and apparently uncomprehending deity a working out of the conflict between the flesh and the moral beliefs which guide our lives and which seek in acceptance and a hard-won perfection. But not, as in Sophocles' case, understanding.

The three plays were conceived from the beginning as a trilogy and were written, in fact before Lawler's, though not performed in their entirety till now. At the time Kenna was suffering chronic kidney disease and his life progress was limited. He was living, as he describes it, a kind of half-life; and this backward-looking season of his work can be traced in the retrospective of leaving him to live.

And yet the weakness of the trilogy is a reality in that Joe Cassidy's life which forms the backbone is never firmly at the centre. In *A Head God* Joe's brutal love affair with Jack Shannon begins in the darkness like the godly thing it is, and yet a implicitly parallels Agate Cassidy's defiance of God at the end of the play, as though Joe's action had dictated hers. The whole field of generations of Irish Catholic Australians is ploughed for us in this play, and the barometer of the stories that follow it use the harvest of empty heads. *A Head God* is rich in comedy and tragedy. John Tucker's fine production with Maggie Kirkpatrick as an earthy and uncomprehending Agate had her audience sobbing audibly in the gallery at the end of the play.

Kenna is much concerned in the pursuit of form as a means of expression, and the second play is daring and in his audience's parading. It is a decade later and Joe, now an actor and the author of a touring play,



Tony Sheldon and Alan Wilson in *The Casuals' Album*

Photo: Jon Dutton

is one of a company on the point of disbanding. Here we have a new set of characters and a new style of play altogether.

The theme of *Flower Love* is identity. A group of young-minded actors diverting themselves with various sexual aspirations consider who real flesh as they act out the roles Joe has given them. These roles, in turn, represent the loss of the Comedy system as Joe remembers them. Deprived of these identities by the last performance the group falls apart with only a photograph and a shabby autograph book to remind them of something soon forgotten. There, where transient life was enjoyed by her parents, goes from play to play assuming a condition which has deprived her of life. Had a memory is going and her keeps her biography in social pocket as fear of losing herself. Then, a direct betrayal, then by comparing against himself, become a poisonous love. And Joe the observer, join between his homosexual nature and the moral order as which he believes in and the odds for his already-will of fear of never coming to terms with life.

Flower Love is a startling contrast to *A Hard God*, both in its specific form, the narrow range of life it imposes one upon another, and the complex clues to the Casuals' family album which are sprinkled through it. The play within a play bit, I think, some of the best writing Kenna has done. But there are still bugs in the structure which left me frustrated. I would like, for example, some discussion of the Comedy system by Joe and the need to elucidate the facts, more importantly Joe is over-pompous, and the point of his sister's affair with a cruel cousin of his own unpleasantness is not made clear in the text. Nevertheless the fact that these unsuccessful people held the attention

for two hours makes me feel that in some this play will prove better than I think it is now.

An Duper Hope, the last play, returns to safe ground in the Comedy living rooms with Aggie. Joe is now in his 30's a mature and well determined but now doggedly but unsuccessfully fighting off failure. While Joe's ahead of fortune is relentlessly on the downward, that of his charming but irresponsible brother Francis reaches new heights. Francis having desired both wife and mistress is now being happily pampered by his aging mother. His cash money from his boss, has two women and has now trevied the house. Francis is a hollow man unimpeachable but hollow. His charm lies in his lack of love and commitment, in contrast to Joe whose commitments to love need to act being only pain. This is Francis's moment, not Joe's. My text is not new, Joe says at the end of the play, but it will come.

It is a personal triumph for John Tinkler and Peter Kenna to have succeeded in mounting such a project for a week at the Adelaide Festival, and their faith has been rewarded as a transfer to Sydney. As Joe, Tony Sheldon also contributes impressively, as he often with conviction and assurance a personality at three stages of development and in three environments. It is a splendid performance.

Not all the cast manage three roles as well. *An Duper Hope* is Francis's play and Ray McArthur is not a big enough actor for such a role, though his comradely Paddy in *A Hard God* was delightful. It was a huge undertaking for a cast not all that well prepared by experience. Their time rewarded as well as they did it due to the director and the deeply felt performances of Sheldon and that late actress Maggie Kirkpatrick.

A bit like making the Black and White Minstrel Show, a plea for racial equality.

EAST

REX RAMPHAM

East by Steven Berkoff. London Theatre Group as the Arts Theatre Club, presented by Eric Durr. (actors: Steven Berkoff, Douglas Byrnie-Jones, Miss John Price, Leslye, John McIntyre; Production Manager David Harvey).

Cast: Matthew Southfield; Miss Ray McArthur; John John McArthur; John Barry Phillips; Miss Steven Berkoff.

East is a collection of loosely-articulated sketches (the programme divides them into random scenes of life and character in the East End of London. The text has been worked into rough number programmes (in effect the clash of meter with slang surrounded me not a little of *The Jewish Musical White*). The work is performed by five actors with an accompanying pianist. One of the main roles is played by the author and director, Steven Berkoff. The other actors represent a broad range and a cast, and a girlfriend. Minimal props are used, with some careful, theatrical (in the rather negative sense) lighting, some good physical work (like the sketch—number 10 'On the adventure'—in which Les (Ray McArthur) plays a motor cycle ridden by Steven Berkoff), and some tentative hints in the direction of broad social satire (like the scenes of 'The Jewish Musical White'—number 17—which parodies Marlon's rage mine as a struggle to enter and escape from past female partners).

The score is a large element in *East* a impact. Words, situations and plots related to sex and body functions are fleshed out with a kind of challenging bravado and glitz. The general audience reaction is a great deal of delighted acceptance of this subject as such and decorum, although the New Arts' wooden floors made presenting departures quite a feature of the first half. This element of the production seemed to me well justified on the level of documentary realism and also on the level of social protest, the aggressive and 'vulgar' level which is the stimulus for the vigorous attack of the production. It was first performed at the Edinburgh Festival in 1975 and I guess the word for it is proto-punk.

Along with the good energy of the production, however, there is a sense of overkill, or repetitive slugging at points that have been made and ideas that have been conveyed. But perhaps resistance are always repetitive and return always, thank I wouldn't have minded the first bit, but he would keep doing it. I certainly thought the first half really long, and it



London Theatre Group's *East*

Photo: Roger Morton

didn't make me feel that the second half would be bound to add much to the experience. I was wrong in the sense that some of the best material is concentrated in the shorter second half. In fact if you saw only the second half you might well feel sorry that you'd missed the first. I found myself thinking that the problem might be a sort of over-embellishment of the material—what was more, no doubt, still being inserted and explored, particularly in a work which was partly derived from improvisation, has become unnecessarily delayed and developed as the piece settles down to life as an established artwork. It's hard to resist the temptation to tidy everything up and polish all the knobs.

Two aspects troubled me: the rather dull and conventionally derivative physical presentation of some of the material, and a clearly discerned clash between the stated aim of the work and the manner chosen. In an interview with Hil Sykes (*Revealed*, 14-35) Mr Berkoff says: "I wanted to write a kind of epic, serious, solemn, lovely, poetic play. It became a bit silly, so then I sang it a few times and then and it sounded like Shakespeare. After that I wrote a few lines in iambic pentameter and it really took off. Shakespeare was very clever when he wrote in verse. His plays might have been very dull if he had written them in prose." For an English-speaking audience who live outside a tradition of theatre and theatre-going, the idea that

these and those and a verse form could make a play less 'silly', the proposition that verse can save a play from being dull, and the inherent notion that anything that resembles Shakespeare is automatically more acceptable—all seem rather alien. For me, this formal rule, like the observed style and the rather conventionally clever lighting, act as an uncomfortable manner beside the revues, burlesque, TV comedy, and improvisational elements that were also contributing to the presentation.

The other worry was that the little introduction and resolution sections at beginning and end—the grand frame work of 'we don't like you' (the audience), 'we shouldn't have to live like that', 'be warned! I now you know our names'—had a quality of ideological purification for what was really only one trap from *Tell Death Do Us Part* and *Explorer and Show* in the direction of social documentary. Some of the sketches are so cute and amusing, some of the jokes are so funny that it seems waste to give at a good time at the expense of the Characters like *Ham* and *Dead* and then look up in the north for not taking their problems seriously. It's a bit like making the *Black and White Musical Show* into a plea for racial equality.

But the theory is finally less important than the practical event and *East* is a word enough display of theatrical energy to overcome doubts of that sort.

Melodramas and misfits

SYDNEY SURVEY

ROBERT PAGE

Crushed By Desire — Music Hall
The Run-Run Club — Seymour Centre
Overseas
The Clamor of the Sorrow-Clam — Naxos
Knights — Theatre

Two home grown plays were premiered in Sydney this month, thankfully not too unusual an event these days, but extraordinary in those cases when both owe more to the twentieth century than our own. Both are neo-melodramas, in that Michael Boddie's latest conundrum of heroism and villainy, *Crushed By Desire* is almost more of a musical than a melodrama, and the major piece in *An Evening at the Royal Victoria Theatre*—under the direction of Max Crumpton, is a burlesque, *The Run-Run Club*.

A major theme of both is the corruption of big business, aided and abetted by the police department. Each casts the individual who in cavalier fashion transgresses civil corporate health laws. *The Run-Run Club* because of its exposure of corruption from the life was banned "as it contains matter of a libellous nature" by the Colonial Secretary in 1843 then forgotten until now.

Sensationalism, black and white morality, exaggerated acting and simple, if still hanging, plots are the stock in trade of melodrama, making it an abiding popular form. The Music Hall gives little for any about more, with its success resting on its ability to attract the kind of audience who wouldn't cross the threshold of any other kind of theatre building and its aim of the very highest standards of performance and settings. With *Crushed By Desire*, also directed by the author, it has excelled itself.

With Boddie proving to be such a master of the form, the Music Hall can continue to call on the very ablest actors and set designers. Bruce Barry, using his voluptuous baritone as the classically revealing Sir Gaudiel Squares and Alida Johnson, as the gum-tapping, target-missing, Biddy Carmel, give the lie to the adage that actors can't sing and vice versa. Set in the goldfields the play has a double plot of two-twenty, almost identical and revolved by Seymour Tom Lippman's genius for design provides sets which, more than a visual backdrop for the actors, are an integral part of the show. The "crusher" of the title, symbolising the methods of and finally consuming the devoted villain, is a masterpiece—and a hallmark of the Music Hall's increasingly inventive theatricality.

Singing a previously unseen play, as the student group *Overseas* has, deserves all credit, but it is unfortunate that their style and standards are so far below those of the

Music Hall. The *Rox Dan Club* would originally have been part of an evening's program, as a suitable exchange has been conceived supposedly with George Cohan and his actors, in which to let it. The rest of the bill is made up of amusing short sketches and a badly mis-pitched melodrama *Fanny or the Indian Wife*, which failed to make its "great start" (as an opportunity for robust and full-blooded acting).

The *Rox Dan Club* itself is about an spontaneous Sydney club of the six whose members (mainly local sport in drinking, gambling, leaving law officers and exposing charlatans); their women pursue them in money and reform their high spirits. Sadly, without a first rate production the play in the end seems unworthy of all the research which has gone into the staging, styles and music of the period (superbly arranged by Peter Wilkinson). An attractive set, in what is otherwise a barn of a theatre, did not go far enough to build the intention of recreating the atmosphere of the famous Royal Victoria Theatre of 1843.

From two indigenous melodramas to two modern American plays. *The Caren of the Starving Class* is a play of modern, a description of that socio-economic group who supposedly dream about belonging to a world of achievers. Because of something in their makeup they never have, never do and never will realize their full potential. *Madam* are not only in the play but of it — the most striking one being the magnificent lead image "The story Dad used to tell" of an eagle and cat fighting in mid air; the saucer dragged down by the terrified earth-bound creature tearing at its throat. Is the majestic eagle meant to symbolize these crippled individuals? In the end walked, predatory society at something, shodding around their person almost? Their curse, the universal life blood dripping away, not as firmly but sterility of purpose, never becomes clear. True, the play therefore avoided defects even, but ended up as a stalemate of frustration for characters and audience alike.

The nucleus of the wretched family, father, mother, son and daughter, were given by and large sound method treatment by the actors. Hugh Keny Ryan, Carole Skinner, Malcolm Knits and Suzanne Roylance respectively. Emotional intensity generated a certain compulsion to begin with, but it soon lost its grip. Ken Hoyer's direction appeared adequate though lacking imagination in blocking and attention to voice, but the real problem here is the play (and the choice of it) — a waste in the general standard of Natural repertoire.

Whether at the Ensemble ends in cynicism rather than mindfulness, but with considerably more interest along the way. The situation can hardly be said to be theatrical per se, though following these girls from school to college to the workaday world through conversations at each of these junctures is potentially fascinating material. The three scenes, on stage throughout, making up and changing during intervals of their cynical, vandy habits, are strong and as convincing as they can be under the presentship

direction of Brian Young, but dissatisfaction crops in with the realization that the characters are just predictable stereotypes and any surprises are just that, lacking motivation from within.

The girls progress from being cheerleaders at a small town American school to the equivalent at college, but from there Joanne will marry and have kids, Kirby teach PE, only for want of a positive purpose and Mary will off to Europe to seek her freedom. Their final meeting, their changing accents charting their progress in New York, reveals Joanne to be

as invincibly provincial as ever, but not as happy with monogamy and domesticity as she professes. Mary rubs and sneezes as a dealer in exotic art and vitamins of mineral beds, and Kathy with a new found philosophy living as a wealthy kept woman. The moral has something to do with a blinkered existence as big fish in the tiny pool of institutional life bringing people too late to freedom, initiative and stimulation to ever find personal fulfillment. "All is vanity and vexation of spirit".

(more N&N Review on Page 10)



Gordon Peake (Peter Fawcett), David Waters (Harold Carver), Anne Somer (Sally Lightfoot) and David Chivers (Pina) in the Music Hall's *Crushed By Desire*. Photo: Patrick Jones



THE GLASS MENAGERIE THE RIGHT MAN

TIMOTHY DABLER

The Glass Menagerie by Tennessee Williams
South Australian Theatre Company at the
Playhouse, Festival Centre, Adelaide, SA
Director: **Bob Blair**; Designer: **Richard Roberts**
Amelia Wingfield (Patricia Kennedy); Tom Wingfield (Patrick Frost); Laura Wingfield (Linden Wilkinson); Gentleman Caller (Paul Hartman).

Bob Blair's production of *The Glass Menagerie* for the South Australian Theatre Company returned to its permanent home in the Festival Centre Playhouse rather than was presented at it. The first performance was at Port Augusta almost three weeks earlier at the start of a successful tour sponsored by the Arts Council.

This is relevant as well as being interesting and worthy since designer Richard Roberts' set and the production itself had to be crafted with the peculiarities of provincial halls in mind. But if it lacked some of the elaboration laid down in Tennessee Williams' directions, it was effective and suited to the mood of the play.

Also relevant was an interview Mr Blair gave in the local press while the company was exploring the backblocks. "It's a play with humor," he said. "It's got a great deal of feeling and on the heads of an actress like Patricia Kennedy she can find those depths, and that humor."

Miss Kennedy in the leading role of Amelia Wingfield does just that. She is proud, dominating, pathetic and vulnerable. In his programme notes Mr Blair whose second production for the SATC was last, refers unobtrusively to her "plangent, potent voice". She used it well here and combined it with a capacity for stillness at the right moment that added impact and insight.

More of the humor is brought out by Patrick Frost as Tom. He has the lines and he and Mr Blair make the most of them. Mr Frost, who is apparently moving east after expiry of his current contract with the SATC, has played Williams with the company before, he was *Red in Kingdom of Earth*. Experience then benefited him. It was a most attractive performance, cool, professional and never losing sight of the character both as participant and as more detached commentator.

But it would be pretentious to say *The Glass Menagerie* as comedy and absurd to

suggest that Mr Blair underemphasises its pathos and endowing some of elusiveness. In that he at most shyly helped by Linden Wilkinson as Laura. Her interpenetration as the girl crippled in more than body is excellent. She is gawky, trapped, vulnerable, a mildly beautiful victim. Her scene with Paul Hartman as the gentleman caller brings out this pathos to the full.

In the end it is the claustrophobia which leaves the most powerful impression with those ready to human people and an era in which, as Tom's words, "the huge middle class of America was masturbating as a ritual for the blind. Their eyes failed them, so they had failed their eyes, and so they were losing their fingers, pruned forcibly down to the fiery brute alphabet of a disgusting economy."

Early Williams intelligent Blair and designer Wilkinson.

A reading of Ken Ross' *The Right Man* was a feature of the series of evenings presenting the work of Australian playwrights that was one of the innovations of Colin George's first year with the SATC. It has been reprised at the Stannard Theatre by The Stage Company, Adelaide's second professional group.

The Right Man is about a young scientific politician with the neo-symbolic sense of Harold Hope the mechanism of power in smoke-filled rooms and idealism versus compromise. In the stuff of politics but the trouble is, to say a politician I made on first hearing it. I find Mr Ross acquainted with what actually happens in only slight and has overall view of the business of government and part an observer. Perhaps it is the uneasy compromise between the symbolic and the naturalistic.

I also thought that, given the somewhat different style of presentation, the two productions shared equal honors. In this second one the work of director John Durr, I especially liked John Noble as Hope, David Hurdstone as the archtypical local member and Joseph Scott Roberts as the politician's wife.

People telling people just who they are. . .

FOCUS

BUCK McLENDON

Let's Take Aged - Stage Company
There It Goes Laura In Prime Days - local
Theatre
Just Above History - Adelaide Theatre Group

Glenn Inman in Lament - Theatre
Let's Take Aged in Prime Days - local
Let's Take Aged in Prime Days - local

Every Festival has a fringe and Adelaide has its Focus. A central body bringing groups onto the stage. Focus is to be thanked for providing a huge array of performers' choices, entertainment and then what you will. From the dancing girl to the political comedian to the looker on the street. Focus was their umbrella.

To go by the sheer number of attractions you would have thought Adelaide to be a town solely of Festival goers whose entire lives would have taken up with one spectacle or another. One after another in a real bombardment. Too much they cried. As it turned out some houses were empty, many seats unfilled. (It's not my concern) but for all that Adelaide was alive with a real energy of its own.

The drama groups favoured the Australian play. Out of the chest came the scripts of the past, on to the stage went the rehearsal play. The quality of performance, that relationship between actor and what was once on a page seemed somewhat at arms. The confidence in assuming a role is something an actor must be sure of. For its believability and grace. The Stage Company stood out as being on top of their trade. Their production of *Let's Take Aged* by Bob George held some excellent moments supported by a cast skilled on their art. We read the play one wonders at its merit, but directed by Brian Debonis it comes alive with a ferocious determination. One performance in particular that of Peter Crowley as the half-brothered John, brought home the need for experienced, sensitive group actors and acrossed if a play is going to succeed on any level.

The Stage Company play *There It Goes* in *Prime Days* worked on an idea level but in the flesh seemed to lack the presence of the actual characters who played Superman, Robin and Wonder Woman. Actionism made it hard to get into a respectable building. Superman, Good acting on the part of Graham Dackert, Rob George and Jo Takas couldn't overcome the problem of a script built on a myth that everybody's seen and heard.

The director of Glenn Inman's play titled *Just Above History* by Malcolm Perrell with the Adelaide Theatre Group at the round the clock Strada. Good attention must have been on a matter of moving history. Glenn O'Connor's play with its wonder and collection of historical accounts seemed almost secondary to her husband's



I would like to have enjoyed it more.

THE SEAGULL

COLLINSVILLE

Directed by Arnon Goldfarb. *Held in the* Ball North WA. *Opened* 17 March 1978. *Director* *designer* Mike Morris. *Lighting* Stephen Amey. *Sound* Steve Fisher. *Music* Mary Hearg. *Musician* Alan Fletcher. *Yakov* Duncan Jamieson. *Irma* Lynn Gray. *Son* Ray Smith. *Papa* Wendy Gaskin. *Drum* Geoff Gibbons. *Polina* Margerita Fletcher. *Arkadine* Joan Sydney. *Trina* Bill Gaskin. *Scenarist* John Galsworthy. *Adapted* Margaret Sanderson. *and* Martin Christensen.

It is no coincidence that Stanislavski, the first great Chekhov director, should also be the last and still most profound supporter into the actors and fundamental techniques of realistic acting. Before him, was invented the problems of acting were at least clear in that dramatic action, however effective, was unashamedly an artifice. As such it could draw attention to its own artifice without losing credibility by breaking its own internal conventions, as in all those famous Shakespearean soliloquies to the theatre as a metaphor of life. The problems of acting were those of dramatic, of finding appropriate rhetoric and gesture.

Stanislavski grasped the essence of the inherent problems and paradoxes of realism. He knew that the actor could depend neither on conventional emotion, or expression nor powerful poetic language to help him convey the play's meaning to the audience. To be credible he must reproduce observable reality, which means the unarticulated, unexpressed intentions and references and lack of knowledge of the reality underlying our own actions. And to give Chekhov as Polina he must reproduce this reality and the chaotic underlying it (which are accurately Yoko's) in spite of the way he might happen to feel at the time—the inherent paradox of realism. His actors were in terms of a concentration on the clear understanding of subtext (as evidenced by me having to add) on the feeling through the actor's emotional memory and creative imagination of the subtext of emotion and through these the appropriate action, and finally the proper formulation of this



Peter Crossley (left) in the Stage Company's *Let's Twist Again*

interpretations of such songs as 'Desperado' and 'The Singer'. Late night and early to ripen.

One truly new play to be a part of the Focus activities was David Allen's *Down Lanes to Gough* by his Troupe group at the Red Shed, an insight into early South Australia presented in an episodic chain of events, fashion, political in intent yet palatable and easy to swallow. The greatest problem the audience faced was to actually see the players, quite apart from the hot tin heat.

The University Theatre Guild undertook *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* for its Festival programme. With a cast of over twenty, Brecht heaved onto the stage. A difficult play with the best of actors but a motivation for students and devotees. Anne Vio, who directed, made excellent use of a stage designed beautifully by Jonathan Smith. Amid flowing banners of Asian inspiration the players told the story of the child with two mothers. Though war and upheaval are only next door and our earth is disfigured while still ruled by the greedy, Brecht's cool story telling comes very close to being distant from today's audience. By way of a myth a parallel is drawn between the adopted mother of an abandoned genuinely child to a group of conscious workers who seek to harness the earth to make things grow. Meaningful in its

philosophy the mechanism of language makes it uniquely in performance. An earlier production by the Guild, of the Brechtian inspired play *Fourteen*, proved more satisfying because of its historical relevance helped also by being performed in the language it was written in. Dance featured, tried at least, in a small festival of its own. Peter Sydney with the One-Half Dance Company, the Kinetic Energy group and the Dance Exchange from Melbourne, the Modern Dance Ensemble. It's odd how support for dance is heavy at the top, in the bottom, heavily subsidised going, yet light at the bottom, the home grown (emerging) levels. As dance moves into drama and drama into dance a development towards a new dramatic theatre is taking place. The many languages merge.

Focus is something every community should have. Of people telling people just what they are and why they're there at all.

Apologies to Michael Benschamp. It was he who directed *Happy End* not Malcolm Haycock.

action into techniques of performance which will work in spite of the particular failings of the actor 'on the night'.

This meant that the rhythm of performance, the buildup to climaxes, the times and changes of pace, took on a special and unprecedented meaning. I am afraid that for all the anxiety which informs Mike Morris's production of *The Turgenev* it remains such notions of playing, which are essential to Chekhov.

These faults are partly the result of having a cast of actors' experience and technical skill, not aided by a very brief rehearsal period. But the problem seems to me to go deeper than that, to a fundamental loss of nerve. To disavow Aristotle in begging Turgenev to stay with her things has almost on the face like a rag doll, turning out should be a touching and embarrassing scene into *Commedia dell'Arte*. Turgenev says goodbye to Maria, talking about how he does not wish to leave the beauty of the place, giving into her face based on her doubtless the whole, thereby making explicit that which I am sure works best as written as subtext, graceless such as the sharing of the middle between the servants are too often omitted or elided. In short the rhythms of the play seem to me to be wrong, and too often it is covered by playing the subtext as an unforgivable error of misadventure.

Mike Morris (director) used an effective device given the cramped space of his disposal: silver poles with spotted perches at floor tops. It effectively suggested the forest setting, and being abstract should not have worried anyone as *Act Four*. True the landscape before it was realistic: but I think in *Symbiosis* proved to that famous National Theatre *Three Sisters*: symbolic and realistic elements can be combined as long as the distinction is clear and precise. In the last *Act Four* emerges through these poles and I for one found it a subtle and effective momentary image of that cage of provincial life which so obsessed Chekhov.

The design fell down badly in the area of costume which in the first three acts looked too much like David Jones' Summer Sale. The maid in *Act Three* wore sandals, but then she had to slip straight on and she does to some internal coffee. When in the last *Act* the cast appeared in clothes more accurately suggesting period things picked up on so.

I would not willingly review any play on the first night, especially Chekhov, but as this occasion it was necessary. But even allowing for this I am sure that many of my criticisms are obvious in the direction and will not be removed by continued performance. All the players worked sincerely, with each there was at least the germ of a good performance, and some actually got there. Wanda Davidson's Nina was very good indeed: she is the only actress besides Vanessa Redgrave I have seen make Koonin a player's work, and her absorption of techniques in her rehearsal to herself as a magpie saved me the embarrassment so many before her have caused. Also fine was Mary Haire's Maria, which their experience made it impossible for Alan Fletcher to match as Medvedenko. Ray Burtin blew it by playing

Sam too much as Koonin (the Cripple). Anne Sax's Koonin was marred by an unfortunate habit of his of compressing vocally toward the end of a sentence which diminishes the emotional range, also both changes of tempo and direction are as yet unclearly focused and badly paced, but I'm sure things will improve in performance. So too will Ian Drummond's Turgenev, which at the moment lacks sufficient weight partly because of directorial uncertainties such as the one mentioned and because at the moment enough time is not being allowed for and very self-examination to develop. I have saved for the last Joan Spence's Arkadina, I think the best overall I've ever seen. With clarity of focus, economy of timing and expression courage to follow where the text leads she manages to convey that cold mixture of charm, slight vulgarity, coarseness, vanity and warmth which the role demands. She does not make you feel that you are in the presence of an actress playing an actress the wrong top of this role.

The more I think about it the more I see that production as having far more potential than it can possibly realise. It would like to have exposed it more, but as Stanislavski warns us the truth of our experience should not be avoided.

Singing the tedium.

CHECHILLA

CLIVE GILLAN

Chechilla by Robert David Macdonald. Hole in the Wall Theatre Co. Orpheus Theatre, Perth. N.S.W. Opened 12 February, 1978. Australian premiere. Director: John Wilson; Designer: Graham Macdonald.

Chechilla: Robert von Macdonald (actor); Nina: Jean Hynes; Lydia: Geoff Gibbs; Maria: Barry Hennessey; Ivan: Ivan Hynes; Tanya: David Holmes; Andre: Graham Jameson; Father: Neville Tait, 1st; 2nd: Margaret Anderson; Sam: Mary Haire; Koonin: Keith Robinson; Medvedenko: Nick Calverley; 3rd: Alan Fletcher.

The Australian premiere of a very new, and from all reports very challenging play, to be performed in what remains the most flexible and exciting of Perth's theatres and directed by Perth's most consistent director, with the cream of Perth's acting talent at his disposal. Given such a set of conditions, it is tiny wonder that one's expectations concerning a season of Robert David Macdonald's *Chechilla* at the Orpheus, were high! Sadly, however, though in keeping perhaps with the play's own resistance on some as the necessary consequence of success, the opening night

consummation bitterly disappointed expectation. To put it bluntly, it was all a bit of a bore.

The reasons are chiefly, I think, with the script. *Chechilla* bears the universal prescription sub-titile "figures in a classical landscape with rain" and playwright Macdonald has chosen to present his central subplot, *Exquisite Dagda's* life of the Italian Koonin as unfolding along with his inner circle of associates that understand of the passion which is the inexorable inheritance of the formerly young girl. Throughout the play then the changes are rung, largely by *Chechilla* herself, and almost ad nauseam on the lamentable demands—*Revolution* becomes *Social* becomes *Fashion*. In Macdonald's view, *Dagda's* latter consciousness of having been overruled by time in this seemingly reductionist fashion was compounded by his awareness of the total and absolute distinction between General and Talent and his recognition that his own right in the former arena was expiring. Voila, again to make a play!

Now Macdonald is less interested in proving the case in the matter of Talent or General either way than he is in depicting the peculiar mixture of confidence and obtuseness with which *Chechilla* connotes the role in which he has been cast by history, as a co-ordinator and initiator of a cultural revolution who will yet have nothing more laughable behind that a reputation. On this level, in terms of the rubricity and economy with which Macdonald depicts both the solitudes and the strength of relationships governed by equal portions of dependence and frustration the play succeeds. Macdonald obviously has talents, exhibited in the ease with which the multiple time shifts of the play are accommodated within the time of one June day on the Lake only a fortnight before the twentieth century was shot dead at Saragosa.

But he is himself on guard, to flow his anxiety with so much that is excessive. It may be that, as *Chechilla* is made to say at one point: "Last is only ambition in a more equally acceptable form", and it may also be that where ambitions have been ranked to the extent that the impulse to further action is blunted, such a man as *Dagda's* should have realised his fate to help speed the passage of increasingly tedious days. But it does not speed the passage of the play to lead it to the point of evoking with scenes of *Dagda's* and pursuit of Italian beach boys in order to meet on the point. Finally Macdonald no doubt intends that the multiple scenes of *Monstrous Deeds* in France used throughout *Chechilla* should aid support and explanation to his own theme. Is that these "scenes" are both clumsily chosen and obviously redundant. If there was a point to them at all it should have been to cast some further light on *Dagda's* a wiser relationship with his protégé Nagnak and Messene. But it is precisely in his treatment of these situations in the play that Macdonald at least succeeds, least convincing, inserting his quantity to richness of language and situation.

Macdonald obviously intended that his

play should be a view of the personality of Churchill, rather than an attempt to place Daughlin within the tradition of modernism, but this does not warrant making Daughlin's homosexuality the most important single fact about him—and this, despite much modified, if high bluster, talk about art, egoism, vulnerability and the enormous personal cost of making cultural revolutions, is what emerges from MacDonald's treatment of his subject.

This finally overpowering material might perhaps have been salvaged had director Meisner not spread himself overly so thin over the Festival period. The concurrent direction of three major plays is a load large enough to tax even the grandly gifted, and in Wilson's case it was evident that his Churchill suffered from some lack of attention to detail, and from a waning of the concentration necessary to unify the production.

As Daughlin/Churchill, Robert Van Marckenberg seemed immersed in the problems of maintaining the physical essence of his character, in the mechanics of posture, accent and movement. There was a lack of 'bit' life in his performance unusual in an actor whose work through out 1977 was uniformly good. Only once during a brief exchange with Joan Sydney in the first act, a moving dialogue on the nature of love, did this quality of 'bit' life—the excellence of which Van Marckenberg is capable, fully emerge. Perhaps this was because the dialogue involved Joan Sydney, whose performance as Mimi, a kind of dam mother to the comers surrounding Daughlin, was easily the best of the production.

It was perhaps, an awkwardness in David Holmes, a relative newcomer to cast him in the crucial role of Wynnie as a cast featuring not only Van Marckenberg but also Neville Tindle, Geoff Gabe and Margaret Aulenti. Even when not at their best (and none seemed to me to be at their best) these performers each possess a wealth of experience and technique to draw upon which guarantees competence and which in the context of Churchill made Holmes's limitations in range, his stiffness both of body and voice, all the more evident. As Churchill's next protégé, Maxine Barry Scarrow was of course the physical embodiment of a dancer—but dancing is not the same thing as acting and Scarrow's talents are, to be candid, better exercised in the former system.

One most question, among the other players, Duncan Jamieson as the role of Podge, a kind of secretary cum general factotum to the Daughlin clique. One of the most complex and interesting of the characters drawn by MacDonald, Jamieson played the role with accuracy and understanding, and while the part quickly was passed throughout the performance (the fruit of the experience of most of the performers), the second was not.

It's hard to be at all complimentary about Churchill—the play is too thin, and the production was somehow flawed, but neither is it easy to be vitriolic when, after all, a general kind of competence has been exhibited. In such a case, what is a critic to do, but wag the tail?

Continued from Page 71 NSW Theatre Review

Production misplaced second to product.

KOLD KOMFORT KAFFEE

LUCY WALKER

Auld Komfort Kaffee a cabaret. Natural Down south. Sydney NSW. Opened 2 April 1978. Director/producer: Ken Heister; Stage Manager: Judith Bennett.

With Robyn Archer, John Gaden, Sharon Rauschke and Jerry Wessley.

Like its namesake *Cold Comfort Farm*, Howard's *Auld Komfort Kaffee* (German for coffee, not cold), is a spoof of a popular form of entertainment of the 1930's. The former satirises the romantic novel of that era in its own ideas so successfully that one can enjoy both the style of the original and the spoof simultaneously. In contrast Robyn Archer and John Gaden also achieve this success, by taking the middle class audience into enjoying their chosen form of entertainment, they get them to sing along to the moving chorus of "The Middle Class are Pige", and even to be aware of what they are doing. Unfortunately the execution of the form, that all cabaret, provoked a regret for the

passing of the original, rather than admiration for the accuracy of the satire.

In cabaret the style provides the content. A brilliant performer can fool the audience anything, for the sake of style they will swallow any pill of propaganda—should it be good to them. At *Auld Komfort* Downstairs production is misplaced second to product. Archer, Gaden and their excellent musicians are unquestionably talented, but in a medium that appears to be new to them they are inadequately presented.

It is definitely to a performer's disadvantage not to be seen, and the cramped, low ceiling stage makes it an evening of craning for the audience seated at tables on the flat, whereas a higher, if smaller, back-wall stage with a cut-wall through the tables would have enabled actors to move, more of the audience to see and the lighting to aid. Martin Sharp's custom background is fascinating, but potentially distracting (and why at Ken Heister the stage juggling?).

Robyn Archer's reputation precedes her as a lady who gives it hard and straight. Her choice of material for the evening is broad and comprehensive, and much well-delivered (though I would quibble with the suitability of poetry recitations, even of Brecht, in such an evening), but for some reason the limits her vocal range entirely to volume, and the vocal beyond note of, particularly (Brecht's), songs never surfaces to contrast with its hard hitting counterpart. "Ah" said a version of the original Berlin cabaret, "but Madame Estrich could also make you cry."

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DON'T PIDDL AGAINST THE WIND MATE

ACT 1



Hilary Furlong and Vicki Harper with the bomb

Don't Piddle Against The Wind Mate was first performed at the NIDA 1977 Jane Street Theatre season on 28 July 1977.

The original cast were:

Frank Bourke
Bob Davies
Norman Davies
Philip Davies
Thomas Davies
Norman Pether

John Clayton
Bob Graham
Geoff Macleod
John Parkinson
Maggie Kirkpatrick
Michael Ferguson

The play was directed by **John Tasker** and designed by **Bob Pether**.

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KENNETH ROSS

Five years ago Ken Ross made a commitment to leave Victoria to establish himself as a writer in South Australia. It seemed the ideal place to start such things.

After one early experience of a production of his first play *Ruby Woodhouse's Birthday* the company involved folded and nothing happened for him until this play got him a ticket to the Canberra Playwrights Conference in 1976 as an observer playwright.

It was here in company with such writers as John Power, Ray Lawler and Dorothy Hewson he found the impetus to carry on writing. "There were no many good writers

around I realised then I would have to push myself harder."

The following year he was back again with his play *Don't Piddle Against The Wind Mate* being workshopped but still without a producer to his credit.

However that has all changed with a span of nine months since the Playwrights Conference his work will have been produced in four States, Queensland, NSW, Victoria and South Australia adding up to seven different productions in all. These playwrights *Don't Piddle Against The Wind Mate* (Space Theatre — Adelaide, Lane St — Sydney and now the Queensland Theatre Company) *Breaker-Moon* (MTC, Melbourne), *You're Mine Alice* (Clarke Theatre — Adelaide, two productions) and *The Right Man* (Gage Co — Adelaide).

40-1013-4000

“If several years now since I watched the real Don’s *Public Against The Wind*” says A man offering to pay his social trip to the union chairman about and get any necessary to know that had been a life long friends — all over a new and better.

A paid Union branch (occupying an old store house) member to end his final working days at the address before noon (the real date is as yet not concluded). As an indicator to what was happening in the real life Union and the community, it seemed strange that some mad men, like me, were wanted.

Birds Darwin is a variety of our age earlier than the degree. Such a variety could as easily be a common structure for today if can be accepted and there nothing to be heard about the well-known of uncertainty in dual space.

Investigations and Personalities

CHARACTERS

PROS: Small in stature. Would, except for his working man appearance,

THELMA DAVIES - Oupgang domineering naheer van het roe overleefde

FRANK BAKER Physically strong appearance, but long out of condition. Although at times he is sympathetic toward Bats his criticism is poisonous. He is at times shown in his signature but his least statements should be equally apparent not only to make the character work, but to a great degree make the play 'work'. In short he should be seen as completely ineffectual.

DAVID A young, vibrant school teacher

**Young Union Report
negative. Should be
closed with care.**

4000

The play is set in an urbanised provincial town, some 100 km (60 miles) outside the city of Melbourne. It has seen much growth in the past few years and such a change and problems of urbanisation.

There is one key throughout the play, the house room of the Dons.

After the 1990 renovation, the 18,000-sq-ft, mid-century style lobby can be partly viewed by the visitors. Occupying eight a passage through a large left of function for defined directions, there is a back door entrance right of which is a window. The entrance will be around small, just plain. I did of your there is a door door

The furniture is old and well-kept, together with the coach and stables of the former outstanding pair by pair and the corresponding furniture is beautiful. The house

The white furniture consists of a perhaps luminous table and elegant chairs and desks from the mid/19th c. against white partitions over the couch. A black-and-white oval center stage. On this there is placed a brass gun shell and several family photos. On the left half of stage hangs a wedding photo. Above fireplace (and perhaps over sporting trophies of the heroines) are an oval photo of Bob in 1847 and then for something! Center stage above fireplace (and things a bare wooden head carving of Paganini. Center stage: the lighting is such that an audience can be felt as given proceeds throughout the show.

As the play opens a large man in his late 30s sits at the table covered by a grey rug which he thinks looks "interesting" closely. On the rug are placed empty beer glasses, two large ashtrays full of cigarette butts, and two packs of cards roughly marked offstage as being the misplaced notes of departing guests.

Make Goodbye Orange not yet Fuzzy, drive carefully Fuzzy (Don't forget it's here again later Friday night) But

The focus shifts as it moves to this *filial* act, a more finality. But appears functionally left of stage in passage above; *Shakespeare* has moved to the *filial* man in self examining the act past the table. But *Shaw* as in contrast to the latter *filial* is a short man even *filial* looking, although he could be described as *way*. There is an appearance of *sublimity* after having about done, although this *sublimity* can be compared with *allegory* in its meaning a *conspicuous* with a *conspicuous* collected *step* alone up in the *collo*. We pass, having *filial* on them. He is *avoiding* *Shaw* on his page which is *filial* last act of *play* either in the *filial* or *recurs*, except for the regular *prose*, throughout the *play* when he does it and *filial* himself searching about *filial*, for the *revers*. *Shaw* runs, a *filial* from the table several times about as *speed* in the *filial*.

[illegible]

10. $\Delta H_{\text{fusion}} = 1.18 \text{ kJ mol}^{-1}$ (at 0°C)

[illegible]

Frank: If you want a bloody audience go down the bloody Yarra bank and get in a soap box — but don't, don't mess around now.

[illegible]

Female: Look, mate. I've got used to you. I can take you. I have had to take you through the worst end of a depression and through a bloody long war. Not to mention the state of confusion

now defines the special supply and now cannot act
of it has the modified value.

Monday, 11 August 2008

1000

more; look not a flannel lock / I was wretched / I was until you started against' the game with that break ball of yours. Even after I've done so long, I've accepted that you and Patsy give me ideas. I've done things that you've got me to bring up at the annual meeting. I was just too much.

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Frank: You would argue with your mother-in-law, so you're not going to get the chemistry of the relationship with my blood because I have

Market Call — "just squarely told and talked to me, and it was marvelous."

Frank: It just went like this: back in our seminar, that's what's wrong with it. You and Gary all night this — this time, we want to put a play a game of poker, just in case you didn't know it. Why don't you play Bob instead of just stare at us.

Age Group	Total (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)	Unknown (%)
18-24	15	10	20	5
25-34	25	15	35	10
35-44	35	25	45	20
45-54	45	35	55	30
55-64	55	45	65	40
65+	65	55	75	50

Frank: Yes, I know, "wicker" but all the pressurings on you had but that's why you should play like, "wicker" or the wicker because you're not in there. There's aggression. Hey, hey about that Friday night when you called me. I think about "You play with me, hey."

1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026, 2027, 2028, 2029, 2030, 2031, 2032, 2033, 2034, 2035, 2036, 2037, 2038, 2039, 2040, 2041, 2042, 2043, 2044, 2045, 2046, 2047, 2048, 2049, 2050, 2051, 2052, 2053, 2054, 2055, 2056, 2057, 2058, 2059, 2060, 2061, 2062, 2063, 2064, 2065, 2066, 2067, 2068, 2069, 2070, 2071, 2072, 2073, 2074, 2075, 2076, 2077, 2078, 2079, 2080, 2081, 2082, 2083, 2084, 2085, 2086, 2087, 2088, 2089, 2090, 2091, 2092, 2093, 2094, 2095, 2096, 2097, 2098, 2099, 2100, 2101, 2102, 2103, 2104, 2105, 2106, 2107, 2108, 2109, 2110, 2111, 2112, 2113, 2114, 2115, 2116, 2117, 2118, 2119, 2120, 2121, 2122, 2123, 2124, 2125, 2126, 2127, 2128, 2129, 2130, 2131, 2132, 2133, 2134, 2135, 2136, 2137, 2138, 2139, 2140, 2141, 2142, 2143, 2144, 2145, 2146, 2147, 2148, 2149, 2150, 2151, 2152, 2153, 2154, 2155, 2156, 2157, 2158, 2159, 2160, 2161, 2162, 2163, 2164, 2165, 2166, 2167, 2168, 2169, 2170, 2171, 2172, 2173, 2174, 2175, 2176, 2177, 2178, 2179, 2180, 2181, 2182, 2183, 2184, 2185, 2186, 2187, 2188, 2189, 2190, 2191, 2192, 2193, 2194, 2195, 2196, 2197, 2198, 2199, 2200, 2201, 2202, 2203, 2204, 2205, 2206, 2207, 2208, 2209, 2210, 2211, 2212, 2213, 2214, 2215, 2216, 2217, 2218, 2219, 2220, 2221, 2222, 2223, 2224, 2225, 2226, 2227, 2228, 2229, 2230, 2231, 2232, 2233, 2234, 2235, 2236, 2237, 2238, 2239, 2240, 2241, 2242, 2243, 2244, 2245, 2246, 2247, 2248, 2249, 2250, 2251, 2252, 2253, 2254, 2255, 2256, 2257, 2258, 2259, 2260, 2261, 2262, 2263, 2264, 2265, 2266, 2267, 2268, 2269, 2270, 2271, 2272, 2273, 2274, 2275, 2276, 2277, 2278, 2279, 2280, 2281, 2282, 2283, 2284, 2285, 2286, 2287, 2288, 2289, 2290, 2291, 2292, 2293, 2294, 2295, 2296, 2297, 2298, 2299, 2300, 2301, 2302, 2303, 2304, 2305, 2306, 2307, 2308, 2309, 2310, 2311, 2312, 2313, 2314, 2315, 2316, 2317, 2318, 2319, 2320, 2321, 2322, 2323, 2324, 2325, 2326, 2327, 2328, 2329, 2330, 2331, 2332, 2333, 2334, 2335, 2336, 2337, 2338, 2339, 2340, 2341, 2342, 2343, 2344, 2345, 2346, 2347, 2348, 2349, 2350, 2351, 2352, 2353, 2354, 2355, 2356, 2357, 2358, 2359, 2360, 2361, 2362, 2363, 2364, 2365, 2366, 2367, 2368, 2369, 2370, 2371, 2372, 2373, 2374, 2375, 2376, 2377, 2378, 2379, 2380, 2381, 2382, 2383, 2384, 2385, 2386, 2387, 2388, 2389, 2390, 2391, 2392, 2393, 2394, 2395, 2396, 2397, 2398, 2399, 2400, 2401, 2402, 2403, 2404, 2405, 2406, 2407, 2408, 2409, 2410, 2411, 2412, 2413, 2414, 2415, 2416, 2417, 2418, 2419, 2420, 2421, 2422, 2423, 2424, 2425, 2426, 2427, 2428, 2429, 2430, 2431, 2432, 2433, 2434, 2435, 2436, 2437, 2438, 2439, 2440, 2441, 2442, 2443, 2444, 2445, 2446, 2447, 2448, 2449, 2450, 2451, 2452, 2453, 2454, 2455, 2456, 2457, 2458, 2459, 2460, 2461, 2462, 2463, 2464, 2465, 2466, 2467, 2468, 2469, 2470, 2471, 2472, 2473, 2474, 2475, 2476, 2477, 2478, 2479, 2480, 2481, 2482, 2483, 2484, 2485, 2486, 2487, 2488, 2489, 2490, 2491, 2492, 2493, 2494, 2495, 2496, 2497, 2498, 2499, 2500, 2501, 2502, 2503, 2504, 2505, 2506, 2507, 2508, 2509, 2510, 2511, 2512, 2513, 2514, 2515, 2516, 2517, 2518, 2519, 2520, 2521, 2522, 2523, 2524, 2525, 2526, 2527, 2528, 2529, 2530, 2531, 2532, 2533, 2534, 2535, 2536, 2537, 2538, 2539, 2540, 2541, 2542, 2543, 2544, 2545, 2546, 2547, 2548, 2549, 2550, 2551, 2552, 2553, 2554, 2555, 2556, 2557, 2558, 2559, 2560, 2561, 2562, 2563, 2564, 2565, 2566, 2567, 2568, 2569, 2570, 2571, 2572, 2573, 2574, 2575, 2576, 2577, 2578, 2579, 2580, 2581, 2582, 2583, 2584, 2585, 2586, 2587, 2588, 2589, 2590, 2591, 2592, 2593, 2594, 2595, 2596, 2597, 2598, 2599, 2600, 2601, 2602, 2603, 2604, 2605, 2606, 2607, 2608, 2609, 2610, 2611, 2612, 2613, 2614, 2615, 2616, 2617, 2618, 2619, 2620, 2621, 2622, 2623, 2624, 2625, 2626, 2627, 2628, 2629, 2630, 2631, 2632, 2633, 2634, 2635, 2636, 2637, 2638, 2639, 2640, 2641, 2642, 2643, 2644, 2645, 2646, 2647, 2648, 2649, 2650, 2651, 2652, 2653, 2654, 2655, 2656, 2657, 2658, 2659, 2660, 2661, 2662, 2663, 2664, 2665, 2666, 2667, 2668, 2669, 2670, 2671, 2672, 2673, 2674, 2675, 2676, 2677, 2678, 2679, 26

Proctor: Oh Christ, why do I have to have you? My man when ever you die has humans. Does you understand that godas, or howdyeast will make all these books about the ways in that boydlay. I can't just let you run where, a little bit to a workin' man — enough maybe. I, perhaps, I want more.

Using Theorem 2, we can show that

Frank: You never used to be like this, you used to come down to the pub, you used to come to the lady. Why did it remember that every system you had they we were down straight out of them - what did you want?

[illegible]

Penalty: You've got used to punting on the books and carnations that's your problem. My, that I'm knocking your carnations, I respect you for that — I want the best carnations in the district maybe for whole state I do. But that your the address had around — wherever, that's the way.

[illegible]

Freddie And I can't figure you out anymore. I don't know what happened on the Bus. I know. Look, I love, I'm obsessed by the woman — I think of you as a brother — that's why I'm scared. (She)

Age Group	Total (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)
18-24	100	100	100
25-34	100	100	100
35-44	100	100	100
45-54	100	100	100
55-64	100	100	100
65+	100	100	100

Frank: Well, the dog has seen many, many pigs. It's enough that one of us does, they. I saw one thing, a bear and a tough you know it tough — like you used to.

Abstract: Some of the most common and serious occupational

Frank: There was a time when my car eye'd at me about everything. I found gas to beches and cranked with two cars at once — the more

any one to help.

Babe (pointing at the chair) Is it you, you mean **Frankie** (agitatedly) You bastard! (There is a silence. Frank sits down on the chair. He takes his car in the car) Well, here's looking up your phone number. (Drinks from car seat phone) *Remember, Jerry, this is Bob!*

Babe She's a big girl, isn't she?

Frankie You know I don't know how to take her home — what's her name again?

Babe Phyllis.

Frankie (Bob's a host at the bar) That makes me uncomfortable — thanks to be so smart, he does. I've told that way he walks around.

Babe Give him a fair go.

Frankie Does the next marriage idea worry you?

Babe What? — oh, you mean the difference of their religions.

Frankie Yes!

Babe Christ, no.

Frankie It worries Thelma. Tell me, how's Geoff and Stan?

Babe Well, we don't see much of them, you know how busy Geoff is, but we get some photos in the mail of the kids the other day. How about are they? (Looks at search photo) Ah, here we are.

Frankie Gee, you a grandfather — sure does make an.

Babe Yes — well they grow up, your kids, and I guess they have got to be there now, like — like we did, it's their life now.

Frankie Yeah, but, ah, but ah, it's not.

Babe What was?

Frankie The time went — our time.

Babe You're not usually so introspective.

Frankie What?

Babe Tell me, Frank, do you remember how we felt when we came back from that war, like being home again — the wedding they were in full bloom and the candles? Do you remember our first day back in Sydney?

Frankie Yeah, I do.

Babe It was as if we were seeing our first spring. Everything new and fresh got like those dried up yesterday's flowers we left behind like a someone's bouquet to flower. And me, saying to you, Frank, don't they look lovely?

Frankie Absolutely lovely! The wedding, yeah, the wedding. I do remember the bright yellow wedding you were wearing on your dress then.

Babe You do remember.

Frankie I don't forget.

Babe But you do remember now?

Frankie Yeah, I remember that day.

Babe And the hope we had, do you remember that too?

Frankie Ah, tell Bob, Bob things have changed, we were young then.

Babe Yes, we were young then.

Frankie Come on, don't you forget.

Babe Is that where it went?

Frankie What was?

Babe Ah, nothing.

Frankie Look, it's all well, yes! (There is a short silence) Did you know who called you on the

other day? Captain Morris, the man you met through the news for war.

Babe (To Frank) Morris?

Frankie For when he remembered I lived here, can you imagine that? Captain Morris looked, not so, remember? I lived here, he was with the police to go to the hospital, so it was when I lived, you see, imagine? I always thought of him at such a good, poor, looked. But you know what he said, he said "Corporal", yeah "Corporal" Barker, he said, we both laughed at that — "You had just", didn't what he said, "you had just". You know I'd never forgotten but he refused. I saved his life at El Alamein that night we were on patrol and he got a — I never told him I nearly left the off, looked — not that I was scared, you know that, it was just that it seemed a good place to leave him. Do you know, that night the bastard had the hole to keep him other while I had him in my back, that's why he remembered me as he bloody politician. He got a medal out of that night, remember? — no my back to get a medal? Well, that's their class isn't it, — you're a reward on the war, man, look! But I guess what he remembered me that as a bastard — God to did look old time, he really did.

Babe We all do.

Frankie (He remembers that night we were with that the soldier. You, you looked, looked at that hole of pink that was bloody wrapped, if it had gone off like it was supposed we would be today, now remember?)

Babe (Looking at his pipe heavily) I've got some thing I'd show you. We stand up and go over to his desk.

Frankie (Don't give me any more of your "back" but tonight, please me, then tonight, you — you know I wonder if you would have got through the war without me, I do.

(Bob removes two books from his bookshelf slowly, then removes an object which is a set of eight from the inside and explains the books with his finger hand) What are you looking? — come on what have you got?

Babe (Hold your hands. Bob walks back slowly, both hands clasping something in his palms, which he opens on reaching Frank).

Frankie A bloody grenade, an M grenade. Christ, where did you get it — from your car, I think. He takes it and looks at it, then goes to compare it to the day. Why it brings back that old battle, doesn't it? It really does.

Babe It's the same grenade you were talking about. It was in the mine, I spent it the other day while I was returning. I'd forgotten I'd planted it there years ago.

Frankie To think that was the little "bugger" which was supposed to get us — bang, fancy that, what a coincidence! The Indians throwing it suddenly pulling the pin over.

Babe (Glad) Bang, bang, it's all disconnected — come on, don't get that pin back in slowly.

Frankie You're — you're looking at me, I see?

Babe Frank, get that pin back in for Christ sake. **Frankie** (Sighs) Ah, yes, you're right, I should go to bed. I should have, you see, it should

have, I should have. (He slowly replaces the pin) You bastard, oh you bastard — to think that thing could have got us after all those years — oh you bastard, here take it — gently for Christ sake — where's my beer? I gotta have a drink. (He is obviously shaken and takes several large mouthfuls of beer) Yes, you're right, yes, no Frank, look, sorry, you're right, sorry years after the bloody war is over — a casualty of the second world war — that was you, imagine that, how would they explain that, my name being up on the honor board of the Town Hall — a casualty of the second world war 1971, that — they'd have to put my name up wouldn't they? She'll love would that go over — it bloody well wouldn't, would it, it'd be the laughing stock of the town all because of you — what are you doing with the thing anyway, you got no right to have it, you can't be here that only I've got half a mind to do it myself — you take it down to the top shelf, tomorrow, just understand — say you found it, say anything but get rid of that thing.

Babe I want to (He goes slowly).

Frankie (Goes to the kitchen — offstage) You got rid of that thing you found, I'm not coming in until you've put it back. (Bob returns to the kitchen).

Babe It's away now.

Frankie (Goes, returns to the room and sits up and looks) But that I was frightened of, you know that — that it didn't make sense to get it with an M grenade — not what all those years, what if I'd just been injured, just imagine the light I'd have gotten a TPI pension.

Babe (Come on about it) — you were injured.

Frankie (Bob's just know what I had before was right, you know everything, look, I had just.

Babe Sure. Well, you, second my pension on Monday night?

Frankie That's not going to bring that up again — no, the hell is it, remember, the answer is no, — I'm not a man, and don't you forget that.

Babe You won't then?

Frankie No bloody then — get Frank to do it if you want, he's a man, he's with you — he said he'd do it — he's nearly as much as you.

Babe (Look — it's the central meaning, it's the only real chance to make an end of it).

Frankie So you get a bastard on what? Go on, so what, don't think you're going to get any rates — it's easy — stupid and by tomorrow you'll think so too.

Babe The strange look will just get a bit, they'll think.

Frankie (Bob's just want to hear my more of your talk, then things like, suddenly they look after their in almost) You know it's a real end of it?

Babe What's next?

Frankie The world.

Babe Absolutely.

Frankie Do you really think so?

Babe In most ways.

Frankie Where's it you're in?

Babe What?

Frankie The outside.

Goodnight Mrs Davies

Exit Mrs Davies

Harmon: I'll see you to the door

Thelma: There was no reason to get worked up over that little business — was there Bob?

Bob: No reason

Thelma: Well I wouldn't want to see any trouble

Bob: I'm only going to put a motion in the proper way — that's all. There won't be any trouble

Thelma: Good

Darkness except for light on Phil's head as ring

SCENE 2

It is the following Monday — the writing is the same. **Philipp** is sitting in *Bob Davies' armchair*. **Harmon** is on the top of a long staircase. There are two cups of coffee on the table. **Philipp** hands begin to tremble

Harmon: Philipp?

Philipp: What? the movement for all times?

Harmon: You know — Miss might notice it. **Philipp** is now looking, she would be well and truly mesmerized by the evil one-eyed look by now

Harmon: She might come out to get one of her dry drinks

Philipp: While Number 58 is on?

Harmon: It keeps her happy like porridge. I think it's that a why did get it for her — to keep it happy — I wonder when he will be home

Philipp: General meetings have a habit of running late

Harmon: What what Uncle Frank said I'm worried

Philipp: For Christ sake don't make any notice of that incident also your father's old enough to look after himself

Harmon: You don't have to get on

Philipp: Well you must admit you do go on a bit about your father your father this your father that?

Harmon: I'm kind of fond of that's when you mean

Starts in Philipp's hand to the sound of a ring

Philipp: He's going to have to look after himself when we get married isn't it?

Harmon: Sometimes I feel you are concerned by my family

Philipp: For God's sake I just don't understand them — that's all. And as for that Frank?

Harmon: You should try

Philipp: I will

Harmon: Good. She gets up off the knee and straightens herself

Philipp: Looking up his coffee and taking a mouthful (all you get paper in that?)

Harmon: I've options

Philipp: I don't think you started it

Harmon: Didn't I?

Philipp: I'll do

Harmon: Sure?

Philipp: Sure

Harmon: It has to be time?

Philipp: Quiet as sleep, — gentle down,

Harmon: Dad should be home

Philipp: Don't worry

Harmon: I love you

Philipp: And I love you too

The front door is heard to open

Harmon: Dad?

Bob enters the door and seems to sneeze. Harmon and Philipp

How did you go to need I ask?

Bob: A bit

Harmon: That's bad

Bob: All I wanted was to be heard

Harmon: Don't let it get you down

Bob: Does the sleep make a fever? *Harmon* is there when a quiet snore at I'm not down — I think I'll have a beer would you like a beer Phil?

Philipp: Thanks all the same Mr Davies, but I'm drinking coffee

Bob: Much better for you too the good old the American and you're such a fine of beer? How was the breakfast?

Harmon: Good

Bob: Good

Philipp: How did the meeting go?

Bob: Alright, not bad, good turn up. There was a good turn up. *Harmon* Pitcher is a Preakness again for the second year there weren't any other nominations

Harmon: The meeting finished late

Bob: I've been at the post, thought I'd call it tonight, been a long time since I've drunk at a job

Frank's general board is heard at the back door

Harmon: That would have to be Uncle Frank wouldn't it?

Bob: Yeah, come in

Frank enters through back door

Frank: the Harmon and Philipp Good evening. (To Philipp) don't be like this

Bob: I'm not like anything

Frank: You said it?

Bob: For I didn't — wanted to but no one would let me

Frank: I wanted you

Bob: All I wanted to do was to be heard. That's second my motion as I was wanted to be heard

Frank: Forget it now — pay up and shut up

Bob: I'm not paying. I wasn't heard. I was entitled to be heard, you know that

Frank: Frank knows

Bob: Then who didn't you tell them? I'll change the chairman. I'll give notice of requesting a general meeting. I can do that if I get enough members

Frank: Don't take it like this — it's not that important

Bob: Harriet Pitcher had no right to say what I had said

Frank: Maybe not

Bob: You know he didn't

Frank: You go and pay the debt tomorrow

Bob: No — not until I'm heard

Frank: They say you've got to pay

Bob: Who says I've got to pay?

Frank: Those damn motions!

Bob: What do you mean? What happened?

Frank: Lots — you shouldn't have walked out like that. A debt's got over with you should have stayed, it wouldn't have happened if you and Henry had stayed

Bob: What wouldn't have happened?

Frank: The motion — they moved a motion that they would take action if you don't pay by the end of the month

Bob: They can't do anything

Frank: Oh yes they can and what's more they will so you have got to pay

Bob: There's nothing in the constitution that can allow them to make me pay the total levy, it's only a motion they're talking

Frank: Look most they're the dollars they really are — you gotta pay

Bob: No, that isn't right, Harold. I've got money they'll break by now when the checks come

Frank: The check came tonight — got that through your head. Believe me make your motion wait until it's next late at a Sunday dinner

Harmon: Charming

Frank: Sorry love — I did my best Bob, believe me

Bob: I don't hear you at all now

Frank: That was after — they were talking of capitalizing you for me, pay — I talked them into allowing you to come — I know you'll do it off, can't you get it through your head — they're serious

Bob: I was a fool all

Frank: Yes you will, it'll be different tomorrow you'll not. At ten past ten to the kitchen and receive with a cup of beer. *Harmon* the man (Good luck)

Harmon: Uncle Frank, Dad's not making a lot, if it's as serious as you say what needs you, of a little people can help them

Frank: It's not that simple

Harmon: What's it?

Frank: Alright, alright. I don't like it one bit, but alright. I'll see if I can round up a few more heads. Maybe they'll listen but you'll have to do your own bit too. You understand?

Bob: I understand

Frank: Alright, alright. (The light's back) If you're really strong, alright, but help me. And help you that I really don't realize you know what you're doing, but worse I don't know why you're doing it

Bob: To be heard to be heard Frank. I'm going to have a mother bear do you want one?

At the light's back the PNC head coming towards it

SCENE 3

The scene is the same the following Friday evening. **Bob Davies** is sitting out his back window in thought. **Thelma** is in her dressing gown just finishing dressing

Thelma: Now looking off her soap. What are these?

Bob: As usual, right, alright — should be

THE DANCE COMPANY'S POPPY

Cocteau: the man, the works, the ballet.



Graham Murphy as Jean Cocteau in his ballet *Poppy*. Photo: Robert Harrison

I know that poetry is
indispensable but to whom?

What others entrise you for,
cultivate it is you.

Jean Cocteau:

The life, the work and the mind of Jean Cocteau (1895-1963) are to be the subject of the Dance Company (DNC)'s latest most ambitious and most exposed every into the realm of dance theatre. The full length work, entitled *Poppy*, the music for which will become obvious, later was performed for three weeks in April in Sydney's Theatre Royal from where it will travel to Canberra, Brisbane and Melbourne.



Costume (Michele) and set (La Spectre de la Rose, Nijinsky) from the ballet and Karina's *Obseques de L'opéra de Dance Company's Poppy*. Photo: Robert Harrison

Pappy has an entirely new identity, especially unimpaired score by Carl Vine, lighting design including laser holography by George Gossard, set design by Ross Barrett and of course choreography by the Company's Artistic Director, Graham Murphy. In terms of playwriting, a collaboration like this is a rare enough occurrence but in terms of the dance in Australia, it is a first time ever event.

"I've always wanted to make a full length 'ballet'" says Graham Murphy "and when I discovered Jean Cocteau a few years ago at New York, it all fell together, the subject suggested itself. There was something in him and his life that fired my imagination: a marvellously rich life, full of material."

Cocteau's works are hard enough to summarize, let alone the man himself: a mixture of baroque fantasy, surrealism, camp, self-doubt and narcissism, an electric conversationist, a troublemaker, a genius by collaboration and one of the few men who created the supposition of

renewed them with meaning, something in these powerful statements that had all too clearly been forgotten. He didn't merely translate them for modern audiences, but re-created them. Even in his own completely original works one senses the place of myth and ritual in them, from the books of *Poetry Opere* and *Phantasmie* to the novel *Le Grand Ecart* (translates for the ballets *Parade* and *The Wedding on the Night Before* and the films *The Blood of the Pear* and *Beauty* and the *Blue Bird*) has always been a strong element in Cocteau, especially modern dance — Ma the Cocteau proved that men and for all — so in theory the idea of passage of Jean Cocteau could be admirably suited and if so following Murphy's promise: the art and the man's mind as part and parcel.

But Cocteau is not all ideal and mystery. For all his obsessions with bleeding hearts, double-headed eagles and further pickled angels of death, he was once a realist. He himself said that the other one approached to a reality. The more important it was to finish a myth. When concerned "realism" however was a matter of so much and interpretation, an examination of the terminology.

Cocteau's early Paris was also the Paris of the Ballet Russes. His Director Sergei Diaghilev had a knack of gathering about him all the progressive creators of the time and Cocteau was no exception. In fact it was Diaghilev with his interest in Cocteau "Around me" that turned Cocteau from the prohibited writer to second vice homonymous darling of the Paris salons to a real, deliberate creator of myth.

The Ballet Russes was also the company that created *Le Sacre du Printemps*, one of the seminal works of the twentieth century, one of those creations, born fully grown by which the characters are new age. Cocteau was inspired. Reverently and told *Le Sacre* — as he said. The revolution towards a "new" structure had been successful for a long time. *Le Sacre* — along with Proust's *Democracy of the Spirit* and Apollinaire's graphic poetry burst the banks and swept away the stupid, ignorant, post-impressionist that was then fashionable (they were obvious checks applied without fail) to different generations.

Cocteau placing himself in the vanguard, identified with all these impulses and grew alongside them and with them. He didn't just jump on the band wagon as some critics have suggested. He applied them to his own style. The theatre for *Parade* could never be used to be destroyed.

It is because the Ballet Russes figured so largely in the early life of Cocteau that he is the most in a way that it plays a large part in Act I of *Pappy*.

"For the first half of the work" says Murphy, "we deal with holographic material: the childhood cross-fertilization, the days in the salons, those with the Ballets Russes and the love affair with the precocious mistress Jean and her lover Raymond Radiguet."

"The second part covers the adult years" continues Murphy "the personal poetry, the search for expression, the interior life and art of Cocteau."

Did Murphy have any qualms about bringing it all together so as not to be confusing?

"There is so much material, one has to be careful. But the dance will be used for every expression we can get out of it. I'm trying to get right away from the 'balletic' image I'm going to use spoken word in it so which can be so to be wary of. Dancers can speak quite well as long as one doesn't expect them to be actors. They will just be dancers who happen to speak as a part of their expression. But everything will have a point and a purpose: the lower before them will not be just there for decoration, they will be used to signify to express something, just like the music, the costumes and the set."

"I'm especially lucky with people like Carl Vine, George Gossard, and Ross Barrett. With



Murphy as Cocteau with the death mask. Photo: Robert Harrison

them I have people I can trust, whose expression and ideas are complementary to a young creative collaboration. The reaction from the directors is unbelievable too. The producers is astonishing, from all to the first the music, especially something that ordinary full length ballets rarely do. They are all showcasing new potential in themselves, potential that dangers seldom discover."

If all of this pulls together, if it all works, it will place the Dance Company in the forefront of all the dance companies in Australia. It already enjoys a unique position: an explicit company always goes to tackle something different. Graham Murphy is at present as great hope as a mature born choreographer, always analysing dance and the things a can express.

It follows out to hope that audiences too will be a little more open than usual and admit that dance is an expressive, and has the gas meters of its own terminology as any other performing art.



Jean Cocteau

twentieth century art and thought. On a more personal level, a homosexual, an open editor, about the role of the ballet: a man who left the First World War "because I wanted to reject it", a door opened into a revolutionary and a modern prophet of new roles.

"Creating the ballet, all occurring it is more a matter of self-revelation really" says Murphy. "One moment I got bogged down in the material. But it's a life and a mind slowly turned to dance. Cocteau used images as well and dance is as to be seen where converging images."

But will it help in conveying an understanding of Cocteau's real body of work, his unique place in this century's artistic thought?

It should be tedious in an article of this sort to attempt to analyse Cocteau and his works, but I think aware of understanding of his place in art is a facility towards seeing him extremely suitable a subject for Cocteau is to the stage.

As far as I can see, Cocteau's prime place of importance is as a "myth maker". His book, examples of modern myth occasionally and



Ballet Company's Festival of Perth Season.

The West Australian Ballet Company offered five new works in their fortnight season for the 1978 Festival of Perth. That's ambitious programming for a small chamber group whose repertoire since re-establishment just one year ago has already gained most notice, including a number of commissioned pieces. The high modern dancers have grown in strength and maturity from their limited finding, and the most successful points in this Festival programme show the company's mature dancers to very considerable advantage. To its low point, the young, sympathetic partnering of visiting dancer Paul Tyers, also contributed a great deal to the fine showing of the season.

The two works which came off best in the season were Jack Carter's *Cage of God* and Peter Davelli's *O Caritas*. The leading role in *O Caritas* was danced by the company's director, Rufus Harg, returning to the stage one year after the birth of her daughter. She danced the work often when she was with Durrell's Scottish National Ballet and her speed, razor-sharp pointing, and powerful expressiveness made it hard to imagine the ballet without her.

Cage of God under the personal direction of English choreographer Jack Carter, reproduced

well on the regional company. The six dancers, including visitors Raymond Lewis and Paul Tyers, mingled and matched and passed off on a few short stage in this allegory about Adam and Eve and the serpent. Carter's airy, veiled, and choreography didn't falter once in its intricate array of mood, occasion and shape in space. It's an striking work and an important addition to the repertoire.

The other ballets didn't live as well on the cramped, long stage of the New Dolphin Theatre. Ron Koo's *Madness and Chronicle* with its fine original score by Vondra Williams, was commissioned by the company a few years back. It's a high style, repetitive piece, venting all the resources of large scale professional theatre to achieve an high finish. With one notable exception the company's dancers and technicians didn't usually get to grips with the work. Vanessa McInnes, the company's star dancer, is an elegant and powerfully new performer and her Chronicle gave Perth audiences a taste of the romantic classical using dancing they love.

Gerard Hebe's *Don Juan* suffered from under production and the absence of the choreographer during the final stages of

presentation. And the fifth work, Sara Saghiani's *Birthdays* was the real disappointment of the programme. The quality of the writing was as much as the Mozart string quartet score, and the dancers were never at ease with Saghiani's totally individual vocabulary of movement which sat uneasily on their classically trained bodies.

The Western Australian company has a handful of strong and experienced women dancers who, in the year since Rufus Harg returned the group have helped establish its identity. But like dance companies everywhere these days, that one is hard put to find equally strong men. To make that season they had to rely on visitors, and it's a dangerous thing to build a repertoire around non residents.

The company also lacks a performance home of its own, and it does look like giving one for a year or so yet while the State Government ponders around deciding on the final shape of reconstruction in Her Majesty's Theatre, now the property of the state. The company is forced to perform in usually unsuitable venues while it builds a repertoire which can be assembled with a new or eventual residence in Her Majesty's.



W.A. Ballet: Co's Anthony (Rural), Vondra Singh, Christina Parrott and Jerry Phillipson

Photo: Bill Arpport



Midsummer Marriage and country tours



Raoul and Hanna (King Fisher) and Maryle Richardson (Hanna) in the State Opera's *Midsummer Marriage*

Both of the productions I have for review this month are off the beaten track, though in quite different ways: one is off the beaten operatory track, the other an exciting foray into the wilds of northern New South Wales by the Australian Opera and the Queensland Theatre Companies.

The high profile event of the month would have to be the famed State Opera of South Australia's Adelaide Festival production of Sir Michael Tippett's *The Midsummer Marriage*, the long avoided Australian premiere version of a twenty six year old work that once again put the nation's opera lovers in the debt of Adelaide's well-positioned aspiration to prove it is on level the Ashes of the South and not just a provincial State school in the backwaters of Ozkland.

The exhilarating thing about the Adelaide *Midsummer Marriage* was that it rang so true in its overall atmosphere. The whole point about the piece, in terms of me, is that it is a mystical experience, a miracle of you like, at any rate, a highly intellectualised parable involving natural skills of time and place from the here and now to some vaguely located time and place.

For such a piece, the multiple layered dream of designer John Cornelia was a magnificence not basically the expensively located forest glade called for by Tippett, but sufficiently surreal to indicate visually that we were at least in part dealing in philosophy and metaphysics rather

than reality. Cornelia's costume further spelled out the dichotomy of the piece (and set of characters was dressed very much as if today's Australia, while the other was coded and has clarified in a vaguely classical, almost aggressively neo-gothic way.

By and large, Adrian Stock's direction for *The Midsummer Marriage* was as well judged and efficient as a head turned emperor and sometimes almost non-existent in his *Don Giovanni* last year.

Jonathan Taylor's choreography was pleasant without being moving, that it failed to convey very fully the complexities of the musical dances, and the differences between them which are detailed so fully by Tippett in his libretto, should perhaps not be made too much of. Joseph Scoglio, in the non-singing dance part of *Shardana*, armed with a little eloquence that did much to make for any inherent deficiencies in the choreography itself.

Maryle Richardson and Gregory Dwyer, as the noble lovers Jenny and Mark, both sang very well and acted as convincingly as the rather too noble and fastidious personalities drawn by the libretto permitted.

The part of King Fisher offers a good deal more scope, he is a thoroughly real and recognisable character: a big, male, well worn businessman full of bluster and threat, which in the opera is neatly illustrated at every turn. Raoul and Hanna made the most of a very good

pair, both in vocal and dramatic terms.

Thomas Belmonts was credible enough as Jack, the rather dull mechanic in town who never before has the guts to do on his own when pushed to the limit of his own simple code of ethics. Carolyn Vaughan was a thorough success as Bella, the part, when handsome secretary who gets most of the few scenic changes in the piece — particularly when playing intermediary between King Fisher and the Americans at the door to the temple.

Ruth Garner sang *Sceneria* well, though lost a little too far into the bowels of the stage to be adequately heard during her big vocal duets. The whole *John Brown* effect of her appearance was inevitably like the dream of Don Giovanni who fell in love, only in reverse: perhaps the gain of the same dreamer's heart was used for the one in the other. They're big on the suburban stage machinery in Adelaide these days.

Finally, though the greatest factor in the weakness of this *Midsummer Marriage* was its ensemble excellence, both vocal and physical. Claudio Mier Friedman was of course a crucial factor, and he obviously was completely attuned to Tippett's music, but he could not have achieved such a rewarding success without an-depth support.

A hefty percentage of opera buffs — concerned as a class as they are within the confines of metropolitan cities — simply couldn't care less if the art form ever reached anyone at all in the bush. Some of the more narrow minded and self-centred undoubtedly think that opera in Australia began and ends on Birmingham, Perth, Sydney, and there is no denying that such thinking has been given its due management by the performance schedules of the Australian Opera in recent years.

It is in the great credit of Peter Hemmings, the new general manager of the national company, that so much has been accomplished towards doing that job in the few months since he took over control. And, because he already been announced for this year involving the AD and two of the most established State companies, those in South Australia and Queensland, and the fact of fully professional country touring — with orchestra — has also been taken by the horns.

Admittedly, the first AD safari was short on duration and lasted as programised three-evening performances of one opera in nine venues in northern New South Wales over a period of one month. But if the performance of Donizetti's *Don Pasquale* I saw at Glen Innes Town Hall on February 21 was in any way typical of the tour,

the whole exercise was certainly well timed.

It was of course a performance taking in many of the finer refinements of city opera, going the way were simple, staid and sedate, the air conditioning non-existent, the night times and windows at a price half that from abroad. If you wanted a drink at interval you had to sprint to the nearest pub.

No matter. Great Britain was a singing particularly with these days, was a thoroughly satisfying. Pique, Rhonda House was a very good Nostra. Robin Donald a successful Ernesto. Gregory Trenchard a last enough Malatesta. All these few singers being who they are, that was only to be expected the real surprise of course, lay elsewhere.

Specifically, in two quarters the quality of the contextual backing and the capacity of the fully self supporting, quickly demonstrable stage conversion led conducted by the Australian Opera's living national house of a resident designer, Tim Legwood.

In the instance, Legwood acted as producer as well as designer, repeating his previous schizothymic start for the AGO's *Green* in 1974, if on a considerably smaller scale. The

production itself was (necessarily) simple and straightforward if probably lacking in the sort of spectacular and expensive touches that can sometimes be indulged in when one is staging opera in a metropolis as vibrant.

In its own way, the Pique set was every bit as brilliant a practical concept as Legwood's 1975 *Julia* set which converted the performing area of the concert hall at the Sydney Opera House into a viable venue for staging grand opera. It solved in one brilliant move the same sort of the obvious problems involved in staging opera in a variety of country venues in quick succession.

Conceptually first standing, it can be looked together and taken apart with dispatch and a minimum of labor and it is sturdy enough to withstand the rigors of rough country travel. It also incorporates its own provisions and stage services and lighting grid which — though of course limited in potential — is capable of providing light of a surprisingly effective and varied nature.

The other welcome innovation in this particular country tour was the use of the recently formed Queensland Theatre Orchestra

together with its musical director, Geoff Tasson, who conducted most of the performances of *Don Pasquale*. Of course being an orchestra inevitably poses sound balance problems in the country touring situation, where, previously all the venues available are of the church town hall variety with flat floors and no pias. But the overall gain in sound quality is immense, when compared with the thoroughly unsatisfactory alternative of performing to piano accompaniment — particularly when an orchestra of the thoroughly acceptable standard of the QTO is available.

It is to be hoped that other country opera tours along similar lines will become an increasingly regular feature of Australia's artistic landscape in the near few years. Though of course, in deference to the rigors and depersonalised inevitably imposed on the performers involved, they should be firmly tied within the proportions of the brief fairly rather than the expensive grand tour of nearly week-long duration which has sometimes characterized such activities in the past.



Kath Thompson and Susan Boyer as the Atlantic, Gregory Trenchard as Mark, at the State Opera's *Mohammed Hassan*

Something old, something new.

Paddy Dwyer's team of Clydesdales in *The Bushman*

Of the three Australian films that arrived in 1976, one had something original to say and the other two reposed in different ways and with varying success, a selection of well-made statements. The three are *The Last Wave*, *The Mango Tree* and *The Bushman*. Each film offers good unexploited camera work and colour, careful design with reasonably authentic costumes and sets and this technical expertise which is the result of the hard school of experience in making commercials. This means we're here to watch, and it is interesting to note that a man who never previously made anything but commercials has produced one of the greatest masterpieces of recent film making, *The Devil's Playground*.

The Last Wave is the most interesting of the three for various reasons. It is set in the present and its theme is a contemporary one — an exploration of modern man's value-ship, or at least unacceptability, to those forces at work just beyond the reach of physical perception. The theme of *The Last Wave* is the "accident" of black impact on a white man and how events progress inevitably from one point to another, partly because nobody knows how to put the thing into reverse. The very core quality of the film comes from the moral distance separating the protagonists and the impossibility of the space ever being closed, because, for one thing, they share the same language but the words have different meanings.

The Last Wave which was produced by the McEwen brothers and directed by Peter Weir, won prizes at the Television and Film festivals in 1977 and was shown at the Berlin Film Festival. It has sold well in Europe but the US,

as usual, showing little interest.

The story of *The Last Wave* is: Richard Chamberlain, as Adam, a Sydney lawyer with a sinister mystery, or something equally stuffy, and David Gulpai as Chris, a very black. With others, Chris is arrested when another black is found dead in a puddle of water after he has been threatened and chased. Chamberlain first flogged suburban houses, swimming pool, wife, two small children becomes involved in the blacks' defence through one of those old race relationships. While there are two films are done in both series it is clear that Chris is a migrant, devoted both to his wife and up to his ears in racial society although, as everybody knows and keeps saying, only blacks have no life.

The blacks finally get into court, and Chris blows the gaff, telling what he knows while others look on the prevailing, perhaps malignant, influence of his tribal ideas. Old Chris played not he but by Marjoriean Armstrong.

Which leads to the classic scenes, the long chairs and — there is a line to your average campaigner's ability to sustain interest in the monotonous workings of a power — and to the climax itself, which is positively wonderful!

Several people were responsible for the script, including Peter Popescu, supported from Australia who has written a book of the film, paperbacked by Angus & Robertson. The South Australian Film Corporation and the Australian Film Commission put up a share of the \$750,000 cost.

I don't. *The Last Wave* is, despite a number of faults — the horribly written role of the wife suffered by Gloria Haines; the evening scene sequence, the unconvincing intrusion of the

triple law character, legal advisors in the court scene — probably the most interesting film and likely to succeed the most strongly from critics and audiences everywhere, since *The Devil's Playground*. It has a good idea to start with a migrant wife and the excellent central performance from Chamberlain and Gulpai.

With *The Mango Tree* we are off on a run down Moulton Lane. The squariness and subtleties of Ronald McEwen's touch, which result in above the standard of I was a boy in Bangkok commences are replaced by samplings at Michael Pate's blowings and in this context given their due by the director, Ronan Dobson. A lot of *The Mango Tree* looks very good things by Linda Bove, cinematography directed by Brian Proby and carried out by Peter Wilson and it has a cast of well-knowns including Robert Helpmann, Gerard Kennedy, Gloria Dawes, Coral Bruna, Diana Craig, Ben Gubiel, Terry Roper (looking a comically anachronistic appearance as Ben Haikles) and Gerry Duggan. The young who is both participant and observer. Janet, played by Christopher (the son of the producer in art) and the role of his group, a band of combined female sewer diggers, duffers and lady homicidal is taken by the distinguished Austrian actress, Gundula Fringel.

The film cost \$650,000 contributed principally by Greater Union. The Australian Film Commission and derived the *Bushbuck*, Supac Company. Locations included Gopditch, a Queensland storm country and the Walls Brothers' Sea.

The Mango Tree glows with conventional

good feeling that is not quite warmish, and it costs of "packaging" it is like a television serial crammed into a hundred and five minutes, but the artificial components help to give it depth and the director clearly has too control over his performers. Perhaps he did not wish to starve it. Robert Huppin and Conrad Kennedy appear to be using a different acting language from Considine, Fitzgerald, Gloria Swanson and Gerry Duggan. As for Christopher Pike he brings nothing much more to the role than a weary smile. The reason that a young woman such as the French actress Miss Fongia (Diane Craig) could take him to bed is simply ludicrous, though as it is, *The Mango Tree* does offer one focus and nothing more. This belongs to Carol Thorne, who plays Marlene Plover, a girl with a chap on her shoulder, not to meet an abandoned mother and a homicidal Uncle Conrad Kennedy. She is a real find.

The *Archives* appropriately released *Wings for Tomorrow* which got its own gala world premiere on St Patrick's Day, at a combined Anthony Buckley and Donald Crombie effort and certainly one of the most dramatically and beautifully photographed films to be made in Australia. The opening in which Paddy Doonan's town of heavy human slugs into the shallow river as birds wheel above and great fountains of water fly up from their great stamping hooves, sets the tone of the film's look: appreciation of nature, human and animal, as a landscape. The film is a realisation of life, however often it happens into a cycle of living.

Peter Jackson directed the photography with John Seale as camera operator. They make a formidable team. And so of course do Buckley and Considine, creators of *Caddie*. It may be presumptuous to equate it as a crisis, suggested to me, that an essential part of the strength of *Wings* lies in their own philosophy. They can be



Robert Huppin and Frederick Pascoe in *The Mango Tree*

trained not to trust in film that is entirely its appearance.

The Archives is taken from a novel by Elizabeth O'Connor which in 1960 won the Miles Franklin Award (Harold Holt's was a more than ten years later for *The Mango Tree* which I have never read). So I am unable to say whether Considine worked with the screenplay, his stock as the original text. The story is that of an elderly Irish woman named Paddy Doonan who has gradually put together twenty houses in rural but dry with supplies from the railhead to the township, in the film represented by Charles Towers. But the time is just after World War I as in *The Mango Tree* and more houses set on the horizon. Paddy was had days away, although he won't admit it, and his prospects are further moderated by the closure of The Glorious mine after an accident. His

younger son Michael is an opportunist in the mine and so out of work. His sister Ann Will won't get him in the business.

Michael Craig, who has had variable film and television luck since settling in Australia, is a most persuasive Paddy Doonan, an impressively handsome and personable but with visible in his manner's gear, seemingly quite at home with the no less awe inspiring and handsome horses, short tempered, long-winded when he gets on patients, dealing the problems of his future, bravely taking up the salt option of the bottle. A loose conspiracy would have had the script reclaim Paddy from the house, which would have made a happy ending that nobody would have believed.

The Archives suffers from that endemic disease of Australian films, too many subplots and too many characters followed up. And really tedious, meandering, or the reading of the character also turns up as in *Caddie*. In *Caddie* it was the role of the Cook. In *The Archives* it is the less important part of Mrs Clark, wife of Buckley Clark the local toll or grange. The conception and the performance by Barbara Leslie are quite brilliant. And it is too tedious to wish that somebody would watch such solutions for 1929 as "room service" said jokingly, and "Mooey".

But on the whole the performances supporting those of Michael Craig and Simon Burke, who plays the youngest son and is to be taken as the survivor who will move into the modern world without too many self-pitying canyons. Russ Brown stands out as Will, The Loner, Bow in the dreadful old gump, Tony Barry as Robert Huppin's Conrad Kennedy with a high direction, resembles an inspired and convincing presence in all his scenes, as if he had never heard of *The Mango Tree*.

The Archives is beguiling as well as beautiful, a lot like an early musical western with special fringe touches of a comedy. Russ Brown and an unforgetting scene on the steps of the farmhouse, where Paddy takes his horses.



Conrad Kennedy and Carol Thorne in *The Mango Tree*



A Massenet revival and an early English Festival.

People with fully formed ears may be able to satisfy themselves that Joffe Massenet is a composer of pleasing variations and rather lovely characterizations and leave it at that. Massenet may do no such upland for occasional passages on his opera. Nevertheless a Massenet revival is well under way in Western Europe and North America. It is not really surprising that Massenet's most important critics concede that he was a master of a certain kind of theatrical effect. The number of opera composers who have a mastery of this kind is small in any period. On this ground alone Massenet might be considered well worth getting to know better. Opera lovers know that theatrical matter, while absolutely necessary in an opera composer of professional stature, cannot replace by itself scores which lack musical invention and personal character. Massenet's musical skill and the economy and ingenuity of his scorewriting have been the attractions of the revival now gathering momentum. Recently I sat in on an unofficial rehearsal of Massenet's *Werther* in the Teatro Comunale in Florence which was merely one of the most recent of a series of Massenet productions in progress in Italy. It is true that the conductor on this occasion, Georges Pélissier, was a Frenchman but his direction found a ready and sympathetic response among the Italian or Italian-sounding of the cast. It is no wonder at all that Italian opera lovers take to Massenet. They cannot help leaving too much Puccini music from him in modern times, surely types, inspired by of scores and values matter. No conductor of the present day has played a bigger part in the revival and enlarged appreciation of Massenet, now being established than Richard Bonynge. His recording of *Eschmole de la Déesse* disc 602, I don't believe to revise basic generalizations on the size and scope of Massenet's dramatic gifts and musical approach. Bonynge has also recorded his own set of Massenet's songs on a Decca single disc (SXL 4782) on which he supplies collaboration in the piano with the singing of the French-Canadian mezzo soprano, Eugénie Toussaint. Between them they perform twenty of Massenet's songs, covering a range of style representative of Massenet's very considerable gifts as a song-writer.

Some of the songs have that French kind of silky melodiousness which inevitably causes them to be dubbed waltz tunes. As the French revived the idea it is not surprising that some of these songs fit in better rather better than the music of composers from other cultures. Massenet's gift is not restricted to volume and



flowing variations. However there are dramatic and musical songs among the selection. *Le petit Arabe* is deeply felt regarding the singer with an eye that also draws out of the crowd to come. There is a truly haunting ballad in the piece for a song about the message of the bells. Those of the songs have a strong, subtle pathos added to them. The recording allows the sound to reach us in an unusual way. I have never heard Tenor sing in better voice and Bonynge provides piano playing which is wholly sympathetic and is strongly characteristic in shape as the occasion demands. As a combination of performance and recording and as an collection of many beautiful songs, not widely known, it presents this record as one of the most successful and desirable vocal discs to come my way for a long time.

The late *Festival of Early Music* on a box of three discs from Apple (DMM4) is a rather recent label for a series of three records of exceptional individual interest instead of offering as the title might seem to suggest, a representative sampling of medieval and early renaissance music, the art concentration of these periods. The artists of these is the use of the voices. The majority of the songs and dances on it belong to the middle and the early centuries. The late David Munroe, who is the musical director of the three discs, leads his Early Music Group of London in impressive but not dramatic realizations of the various political, religious and secular songs performed in this anthology. The songs as performed in the characters of this and slightly later periods, provide only a single line of melody to go with the words. It is no

longer satisfactory as it was in the early days of the medieval music revival to include these as inevitably unaccompanied. A great deal more is known now about instrumentation of the period and most very good players have been used on it, using mainly medieval and renaissance to help construct a slightly musical entity. The playing of the dance tunes is splendid and the solo singing is mostly highly accomplished. No less astounding for its general historical reference is the disc originally entitled *Early Instruments* (Flowerpot music of the Courtiers society). Here the music is simple and unaffected on occasion, but most of it is the highly wrought product of the period of Florentine musicians in which Luciano Florio asked. Lately one of the many kind composers and instrumentists of musical history was the great figure in music of the names of the leading Florentine writers. He is well represented, but there is also more late music by masters such as Jacopo da Bologna and Giovanni da Firenze. The third disc contains together some delightful music, much of it an elaboration of very homely Italian song and dance material, from the period of the Emperor Maximilian I in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. Maximilian was the cultural heir of the marvelous flowering of musical talent at the court of the great Duke of Burgundy and he, as much as any ruler in history appreciated that his best chance of being remembered was to encourage the leading composers and other artists of his day to work for him. The fact that this disc can be seen as *The Triumph of Maximilian I* is as David Munroe notes in the box booklet, one of the best proofs that he was right.

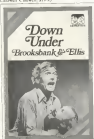


Down Under by Bob Ellis and Anne Brooksbank
Angus and Robertson \$2.95

Tourist in the Antipodes edited by Raymond
Stanley University of Queensland Press \$4.95
Life Plays by Allen Mackay Hobart and
Sloughlin

The Short Book by Jonathan Bernath Lansdowne
Press

Myths for The Dancer and his Dancers by Helen
Calderwell Calderwell \$10.95



It has been pointed out often that the one similarity is no similarity at all but a degree of difference. In its right to do anything, to long as you are personally involved and initiated. This sort of simile has been around for a long time, but with the establishment proving a doctrine of universal fall interest and the reverse nature a doctrine of universal self interest things may be taking a worrying turn.

Anne Brooksbank and Bob Ellis' play *Down Under* (Angus and Robertson), which has been self-published by David Williamson as the best play since *Onions* (sic) demonstrates that their notions and attitudes of some very selfish people. The main thing which makes this laughably familiar group of characters in their usual absorption in themselves and their own interests for a group of people who all have serious pretensions they all work for so have some past connections with the ABC, in its improving that all the conversation reaches around success and personal satisfaction.

Down Under is surely the last word on what the Whitlam years meant for artistic people in

Australia. According to the play it seems that Whitlam said, here is some money go forth and think great thoughts — but my god! Whitlam this is a good view of Australian artists before it too upon Whitlam's dreams for their it goes for disapproval but as far as the ABC goes Brooksbank and Ellis seem to be being proven right. At least Ellis and Ellis need to talk about Art and Trade.

The characters in *Down Under* really suffer under an almost tyrannical during the Whitlam years. What is that they had great things in them and was promised as artists or producers of whatever like Don and Neil in *Flora* Play, with which this play has been compared that gives them the chance to be disillusioned at least when the great hopes for their future are shattered. If anything the disillusion is more intense than the dream. There is only one character in that play who can dream and that is the young girl Rosalie, who restores herself to the simple and in her case quite accurate statement that she is a genius.

The message of this play is that Australia gives you encouragement. A gloomy message but certainly no fault. It really is a very good play. Whitlam's Dreamers are portrayed sadly and rather pathetically but with great understanding. The play made me feel I didn't want to be one of them but it's good to have them there reminding politicians on the wall.

Tourist in the Antipodes (University of Queensland Press) documents rather sketchily a different Australia, and is a charming addition to the growing number of accounts in print of early visitors' impressions of the Colonies. It has nothing to do with theatre but is reviewed here because its author went on after his Antipodean tour to become a well-known drama critic, playwright and translator and champion of Irish. William Archer was only a critic when he reported to Australia, and a clown. He leads the Murray Question (Antipodean) to comic terms, cited perhaps "Antipodean comic" that might as well have been. Two clowns to write, "Why this should be so I could not discover" or something of the sort. It is also obvious that he is not writing out of a particular interest in the colonies, but because he likes writing and 19th century Australia provides an interesting and novel subject. The point of view is rather comical definitely that of a member of the expatriate.

This account of Antipodean life through the eyes of a privileged and intelligent new class will be of interest to students of 19th century Australian literature if to not one else.

It is wisely written and a reflective mood of the by now familiar studies of Colonial life. In the poems, you will not be surprised to hear Australia "country" and the English, as the book (and country) Australians think a lot, unless they were a squatter in which case they gave all their own land. Blacks are cannibals and almost grasp the higher numbers. Another distinctly racist many of the book poems for being and some of them are good ones. The book will appeal to the well known Australian taste for reading what people from overseas think of their country.

Sell in Australia we come to a collection of short plays for schools, *Life Plays* by Allen Mackay, modestly subtitled Two Australian Plays. These are all for and about teenagers. Some of teenagers, now really do believe in the way they are presented to these plays, a sense which to reflect there is the last series of historical clashes. Mackay uses the clothes fairly and there is seriously taking them somewhere, but it would be more to think that a school at school had some long more adventures to do with.

An old folk publication is *A Collection* a little of thirteen plays by Maurice Maugham and his friends. If the Preface and Introduction by Francis Kelly and Philip Mitchell (respectively) are to be believed the only reason for publication was for the simple fact the persons of collaboration in writing. The plays themselves are workable tops and bottom stories. Quoted in the Introduction is the playing, claim by a Melbourne critic that these two writers "manage to record in Australian comedy its aim in which most of our big name writers fail." The book is apparently published in Penguin (printed in States and is an "Holt Playhouse Classic" distributed in London New York and Los Angeles, but available in Australia from John Whitlam at the Second Back Lane Press in Sydney. You may get it at a second-hand shop.

Two more books may be mentioned Helen Calderwell's *Myths for The Dancer and his Dancers* chronicles the work of a Japanese American dancer in a novel style for which I cannot work up any enthusiasm at all. It is apparently intended as a companion to a series of films of her performing her work, and may be useful as such. Jonathan Bernath's *The Short Book* is an extremely revised fourth edition, is a forbidding volume to content with as much as it is no longer as pure music, but I note its publication by Lansdowne Press, far those who might be interested.

GUIDE

A.C.T.

THE BARD THEATRE RESTAURANT

(H2 4244)

Blue Hat Productions

Commas Performance in honour of the visit of H. M. Edmund VII on the occasion of the Federation of the Commonwealth of Australia. Devoted and directed by Gordon Todd with Missions (Franklin). Thursdays to Saturdays (continuing)

CANBERRA OPERA (H2 6248)

Opera in the Schools Series

The Puppet Master by Tchaikovsky. Producer Nina Cooke. Design: Brian Deaton. Touring schools (all July)

CANBERRA THEATRE (H9 3600)

Canberra Opera

A Married Man by Verdi. Conductor: John Carr. Director: Keith Richards. Design: Mark Wagner. May 3-5

London Theatre Group
East by Steve Berkoff. 28 May to 2 June

CANBERRA YOUTH THEATRE (H7 0711)

Canberra Youth Theatre Camp. Sun 18 May

JUGLAR COMPANY (H7 0711)

In repertory: *Art Nino*, a documentary play for adults, an off-gate event in the ACT. *Crusier and Co.*, a participation play for children. *The Empty Mouse*, a participation play for pre-adolescents. *Proverbios*, a participation play for primary schools, in schools and various other locations

PLAYHOUSE (H8 7800)

H on Kyrng Cto, dance-music performer
 May 5

Foreign Theatre Company sponsored by Arts Council and Canberra Theatre Centre. season of back-gate events

Harricks Last Self (Hear by Harriette Williams. *Flamed Out* by Noel Coward, *The Wind* (Hear by Mike Coko. German for Foreign Theatre). Playhouse Five, weekdays May 1 to 30

Dale Woodcock's *Thawers of Pigeonry*

Completely
 May 8-12 and 15-18

Daily 8 o'clock *Real Pigeon Workshop*
 May 17-18, 19

THEATRE (H40 4225)

Tango

Queen What Happened on the Day to the Forum. Director: Ian Howard. May 3 and 5. Tues to Saturday (all May 20)

TIOPI THEATRE RESTAURANT (H8 1411)

Canberra Professional Group

Finalists Cigarettes. Directed by Tilda Taylor and John Newman. Director: Ian Howard. Fridays and Saturdays (continuing)

NEW SOUTH WALES

ACTING COMPANY (H6 1501)

Romeo and Juliet by William Shakespeare. Director: Steve Archer, with Kate Ferguson. Dances: Linda Lewis. Music: Johnnie. Dates: May 1-10

ARTS COUNCIL OF NEW SOUTH WALES

(H1 6818)

Hayes Robert Brown, multi-instrumentalist. Schools tour of NSW, western areas and Sydney metropolitan. May 1-7

Bob Fishman and Friends, vocalists, pianists, musicians and jugglers. Schools tour of Sydney South Coast and Western areas. May 1-7

ENSEMBLE (H2 8175)

Visions by Jack Hayler. Director: Brian Young. (continuing)

GENESIA (H7 3021)

The Royal Hunt of the Sun by Peter Shaffer. Director: Tony Hayes. Sun May 6

HER MAJESTY'S (H2 3011)

The Apple Cart by the Chevalier. Farrel Theatre Company starring Keith Miller. From Dawn Point and Ray. Director: May 1-5. *Just a Picture at the Age*. Barry Humphries. students and teachers. From May 1

MARLBOROUGH THEATRE (H8 3101)

Journeys End by R. C. Sherriff. Director: Alan Duncan. To June 2

MARIONETTE THEATRE OF AUSTRALIA

(H7 1418)

Harlequin the Doodle-OP. M. Fettes. *Act of Puppet Show*. Director: director: Richard Blackburn and Steve Hanson. Tour of Sydney Metropolitan community centres. From May 1

MUSIC HALL THEATRE RESTAURANT

(H9 8221)

Cracked by Owen, written and directed by Michael Biddis. With Anne Bentley. Bruce Barry. Reg Cullen. David Calhoun

MUSIC HALL THEATRE RESTAURANT

(H7 6181)

Emore, written and produced by Peggy Morrison. starring the Topanga Family

NEW ARTS THEATRE (H6 1601)

Star by Steve Berkoff, with the London Theatre Company. To May 27

NEW THEATRE (H9 3411)

The Radio in the Mirror Show by John

Brown. Director: Paul Quan. Throughout May

NIMROD (H9 3021)

Upstairs Comedy of Errors by William Shakespeare. Director: John Bell with Henry Serris. Robert Lewis. Robert Davis. Melodine. Jack, John McIlroy. Tony Melrose. Drew Forsyth. Rob Hewitt. Maggie Dence. Elizabeth. Lancelotti. Anna. Vodka. Maggie. Blues. To June 10

Devotions. 4 Authors. *Living with Shakespeare* and John Cullen. To May 19

No 16 THEATRE RESTAURANT ST

Leicester (H9 8131)

Al Capone's Birthday Party by Pat Carney. Director: producer, Pat Carney. choreographer: Keith Lewis. cast, Doug Anderson. musician: Ray Wilson. Continuing

OLD TOTE (H6 1421)

Drama Theatre. *Opera House*. *The Misanthrope* by Moliere. translated by Tony Harrison. Director: Ted Craig. with Barry Gray and Kate Forrester. To June 4

Parade Theatre. *Reinventing Art Between Gardens* by Alan Ayckbourn. Director: Peter Colquhoun, with Peter Woodford, Kate Sheehy, Alan Archer, (cast: Bruce) Jean McNeil. To May 19

OSCAR HOLLYWOOD PALACE THEATRE RESTAURANT

Sons (H9 4411)

Platoon. *Year Six*. *Boys*. written by Don Bailey and Peter Paine. Director: Jon Wong, with Lee Harris, Ben McDonald, Anne Gray, John Hansen, and Greg Ralston. (also choreographer) Continuing

Q THEATRE (H6 1421 5721)

Abroad Person Singular by Alan Ayckbourn. Director: Dennis Warburton. Permits, to May 14, backdrops. May 17-21. Performance, May 24-26

RIVERINA TRUCKING COMPANY (H9 21 2121)

Domestic Study by David Simpson and Jim Watt. Wagon May 14, leaving May 15-21. *A Day in the Death of Joe Egg*. Opening date not yet fixed

QUEENSLAND

ARISTHATRE (H6 1441)

The Rite of the Foreword by Alan Ayckbourn. Director: Tim Minchin, designer: Mrs. Huxley. To May 19

Next One Out by Fiedrich Schiller. Director

Margaret Brown 15 May-24 June
Children's Theatre: *The Bushy Old Wizard and the Giant Cook* by Eugene Hickey Director:
Barbara Webster 20 May-10 June

CAMERATA (08 66611)
Pianists perform as yet

THE REGALDO (Hardgrave St., West End)
Backings Festival Hall (29-4158)
G & M Productions by arrangement with Harry
M Miller
The Rocky Horror Show by Richard O'Brien
Director, Bryan Nason

HIS MAJESTY'S (221 3771)
The Gang Show 5-13 May
Queensland Light Opera Co
The Journey of the Giant RMT Players by
Colbert and Sullivan (M Theatre Orchestra
conducted by David Macfarlane who directed
Director, Alan Hurley

LA ROUTE (06 1622)
Young *My* by Steve 1 April Director: Rick
Edgington designer: David Bell with Rod
Went
School for Clovers by S & W. Wenton translated
by Ken Campbell Director, Sean Mac designer:
Lynn Foxon 1-12 May
City Stage by Stephen Patrick Director
Jennifer Hockridge technical director: Leigh
Wrayne from 19 May

QUEENSLAND ARTS COUNCIL (221 3989)
Carnegie Entertainment on line
The Bushy Old Wizard from 21 May

QUEENSLAND THEATRE COMPANY
(21-6171)
King Lear by William Shakespeare Director,
Alan Edwards designer: Peter Cooke with
Warren Mitchell 15 May-10 June

TWELFTH NIGHT (22 3099)
In Place of Love by Terence Rattigan Director,
Bill Richmond designer: Stephen Grew with Alan
Huddy Bar Houston Greg Parker 3-17 May

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

ADELAIDE THEATRE GROUP

50 Melbourne Parade
Near To Nothby May 4-7

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN THEATRE COMPANY (51 5451)

Henry 4 Parts 1 and 2 by William Shakespeare
Directed by Colin George May 3-17

STATE OPERA (252 5583) (new)

The Opera Theatre
The Marriage of Figaro
1, 3, 4, 10, 11, 18 May

THEATRE at the Red Shed
Cnr Arden and Curdwell Streets
Guest writers and directed by Keith Galbraith
May 4-16 Thurs to Sat

TASMANIA

TASMANIAN PUPPETS THEATRE (23 7996)

Alleg Shadow Show Greater Hobart and
Schools Tour To May 5
The Golden Nugget Show by Peter Wilson and
John Palmeron Touring Victoria May 15-20
Thurs to Theatre Royal May 31 June 9

TASMANIAN THEATRE COMPANY

(24-6284)
Theatre Royal
Shakespearean Light Opera Company
To May 9
University Avenue Old Hark Company May 12-17
The Golden Nugget Show Set Thomas and
Puppet Company

VICTORIA

ARL NACHHEIDENS THEATRE (26 961)
The Glass Menagerie by Tennessee Williams
Directed Peter Tulloch
Adapt or Die written and directed by Peter
Tulloch

Also May holiday play and Drama Workshop
AUSTRALIAN PERFORMING GROUP
(247 7154)
Back Theatre
Series of political play readings May 2-7
London (The Not New Play) May 8-22
Late Winter - George Orwell May 11 June 2
From Theatre
The Radio Show April 24 May 1

FOURIES THEATRE RESTAURANT (247 2305)

Original comedy entertainment Wednesday to
Saturday New Acts Monday nights

FLYING TRAMPEZ CAFE (H) (2771)

Caplan Reed and Co

HOOPLA PRODUCTIONS (2) (2618)

Let Me In by Ted Nelson May 12 June 3
\$9000000

J C WILLIAMS (2)

Har Majesty's Theatre
A Crown Law
Comedy Theatre

My Fair Princess starring Paula Wilson and Bill
Fairy To May 15

Jesus (The People's Choice) starring Jack Snodgrass
and Hans Boden Sommer From May 15

LAST LAUGH THEATRE RESTAURANT (249 6204)

Four Seasons an *adult after* starring
Betsy Berkley's and Peaches La-Creme

LA MAMA (218 4959)

The Prince of Meville Janga May 4-14 and
The Blood, Tears of Doubt both by Barry
Edwards

Guest Troupe from Adelaide May 18-20

MELBOURNE THEATRE COMPANY (214 4000)

Russell Street Theatre
Matador by Alex Rose March 23 May 13
Directed by Mervyn Rothbart May 23
July 2



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Workshop/production May 15-20
Admission Intake
The Boxer Starring by George Fawcett
 May 4-June 10

PILGRIM PUPPET THEATRE (014-6658)
Alert In Wonderland

PRINCESS THEATRE (082 2911)
The Australian Opera Company
Madness: Don Giovanni: The Conquerores: The
Flying Dutchman in repertory from May 3

TIERI AND JOHN'S THEATRE (041-9032)
 (and 1734)

Old Time Music Hall (John and Tiki) Newman,
 Myrtle Roberts, Vic Gordon Tuesday-Saturday

VICTORIAN STATE OPERA (45 5641)
Schools programmes tour
The Barber of Seville From May 13 on tour
 Albany reprie

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 details of current productions

HEIDELBERG REPERTORY (49 2363)

MALVERN THEATRE COMPANY
 (011-0028)

PUMPKIN THEATRE (Richmond) (42 8237)

1012 THEATRE Ferntree Gully (796 3634)

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

HOLD UP THE WALE (181 2403)
Spooking Double: The Last Days Show by Jack
 Hubert

The Big Mugs Show by Alex Bazo Director
 John Milton From April 26

PLAYHOUSE (125 1088)
The Club by David Williamson MTC
 production April 27-May 26

A Journey Named Doctor by Tennessee
 Williams Director Stephen Barry May 24
 June 17

Cavaliers
Also July by August Strindberg Director Mike
 Morris May 1-27

THE REGAL (91 1535)
In Presence of Country Director Ral again Director
 Anthony Sharpe From May 4

WA BALLETT COMPANY (382-3448)
The Onegin Theatre
 Selected programmes: Dance from William Tell
In A Clair Play And A Moment Please
Festival of Jazz Chicks Suite of Dances May 4
 on

WA OPERA COMPANY (122-4766)
Prod: Entertainment Centre
The Gondoliers by Colman and Sullivan with
 Jane Woodhall and Peter Pratt Company, Alan
 Alden Producer Betty Ponder May 3-12

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Q Theatre

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April 26-May 14 — Perth
 May 17-21 — Bankstown Town Hall
 May 24-28 — Meriden Auditorium
 Penrith

SHORT

by HELEN KESSE

June 7-22 — Perth
 June 25-July 1 — Bankstown Town Hall
 July 5-9 — Meriden Auditorium
 Penrith

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